

W.H.G. Kingston

"My First Cruise"

Story 1—Chapter 1.

Notes from Pringle Rushforth's Sea Log.

A Letter to Brother Harry, at Eton.

It has become a reality, dear Harry. I feel very strange—a curious sensation in the throat, just as if I was going to cry, and yet it is exactly what I have been longing for. You know better than any one how I had set my heart on going to sea, and yet I thought that I should never manage it. But, after all, here I am, really and truly a midshipman; at least a volunteer of the first class, as we are called now. The first time I put on my uniform, with my gold-band cap and dirk, I could not help every now and then looking at the gold lace on my collar and the buttons with the anchor and crown, and very pretty and nice they looked; and I do believe that this half-reconciled poor mamma, and Fanny, and Mary, and dear little Emily to my going when they saw me with them on. I'll tell you how it all happened. Uncle Tom came to stay with us. He had been at the Hall a week when, the very day before I was to go back to school, while we were all at breakfast, he got a long official-looking letter. No sooner had he torn it open and glanced at its contents, than he jumped up and shook papa by the hand, then kissed mamma, exclaiming, "They do acknowledge my services, and in a handsome way too, and they have appointed me to the Juno intended for the South American station; the very ship I should have chosen! I must have Pringle with me. No nonsense, Mary. He wants to be a sailor, and a sailor he shall be. He's well fitted for it. I'll have no denial. It's settled—that's all right." (I had been telling him the day before how much I wanted to go to sea.) He carried his point, and set all the household preparing my kit, and then posted off for London, and rattled down to Portsmouth to hoist his flag. He is not a man to do things by halves. In three days I followed him. The ship was nearly ready for sea. Most of the officers had joined. There was only one vacancy, which I got. Another captain had been appointed, who had been superseded, and he had selected most of the officers. Many of my messmates are good fellows, but of others the less

said about them the better, at least as far as I could judge from the way they behaved when I first went into the berth. We carry thirty-six guns. There is the main deck, on which most of them are placed, and the upper deck, which is open to the sky, and where all the ropes lead, and where some guns are, and the lower deck, where we sleep in hammocks slung to the beams, and where our berth is; that is the place where we live—our drawing-room, and parlour, and study, and anything else you please. There is a table in the centre, and lockers all round, and if you want to move about you have to get behind the other fellows' backs or over the table. Under it are cases and hampers of all sorts, which the caterer has not unpacked. He is an old mate, and keeps us all in order. His name is Gregson. I don't know whether I shall like him. He has been a great many years a midshipman; for a mate is only a passed midshipman who wants to be a lieutenant, but can't. He has no interest—nobody to help him on—so there he is growling and grumbling from morning to night, declaring that he'll cut the service, and go and join the Russians, and make his country rue the day; but he doesn't, and I believe he wouldn't, if they would make him an admiral and a count off-hand. My chief friend they call Dicky Snookes. His real name, though, is Algernon Godolphin Stafford, on which he rather prides himself. This was found out, so it was voted that he should be re-christened, and not be allowed under dreadful pains and penalties to assume his proper appellation in the berth; so no one thinks of calling him anything but Snookes. He is getting not to mind it, which I am glad of, as he does not seem a bad fellow, and is up to fun of all sorts. There is another fellow who is always called Lord Jones or My Lord, because he is as unlike what you would suppose a nobleman to be as possible. Then there is Polly. His real name is Skeffington Scoulding, which was voted too long, so, as poor fellow he has lost an eye, he was dubbed Polyphemus, which was soon turned into Polly. I haven't got a new name yet, so I hope to stick to my own. I have picked up a good many more bits of information during the three days I have been on board, but I have not time to tell them now. I will though, don't fear. I hope to be put in a watch when we get to sea. I don't mean inside a silver case, to go on tick!—ha!—ha!—ha! but to keep watch under a lieutenant, to see what the ship is about, and to keep her out of scrapes. Good-bye, dear old fellow, I'll tell you more when I can.—Your affect brother, Pringle Rushforth.

Story 1—Chapter 2.

Notes from my Log.

The capstern went round with a merry tune—the boatswain's whistle sounded shrilly along the decks with a magic effect—the anchor was hove up—the sails were let fall and but a few minutes had passed, after the captain gave the word of command, before the ship, under a wide spread of snowy canvas, was standing down the Solent towards the Needle passage. It was a lovely summer's day, the sky was blue and so was the water, and the land looked green and bright, and the paint was so fresh, and the deck so white, and the officers in their glittering uniform had so polished an appearance, and the men in their white trousers and shirts with worked collars and natty hats, looked so neat and active as they sprang nimbly aloft, or flew about the decks, that I felt very proud of the frigate and everything about her, and very glad that I had come to sea. To be sure matters below were not quite in the same order just then. Still prouder was I when we saluted the Queen, who was at Osborne—firing away first on one side and then on the other, with a flash and a roar, and a huge puff of smoke. We passed out at the Needles with the cheese-like castle of Hurst and its red ninepin-looking lighthouses on our right, and a little further to the west on our right with the high cliffs of Alum Bay striped curiously with coloured sand and three high-pointed rocks, wading out into the sea, as if wanting to get across to the north shore. These are the Needle rocks. We had run the high white cliff at the west end of the island out of sight before dark, and that, except a thin blue tint of land away to the north-east, was the last I saw of the shores of dear old happy England. I daresay others felt as I did, but we all had so much to do that we hadn't time to talk about it. Dickey Snookes had been to sea already for a few months, and of course knew a great deal more than I could—at least he said that he did, and on the strength of it offered to tell me all about everything. I thought I saw a twinkle in his eye, but his eyes always are twinkling, so I did not suspect him of intending mischief. We had some vegetables for dinner—some carrots and turnips—and he asked me if I knew where they grew? I said in some garden, I supposed. "Of course, young 'un," he answered. But you wouldn't suppose we had a garden up in our foretop, where we grow all sorts of greens and other things. You have not found your way there, I suspect. I told him that I had not, and he said that I must go up there that very afternoon with him, and that he would introduce me to the head-gardener, who was always up there looking after the gooseberry bushes. I knew that this was a joke, but still I wanted to see what he meant. I said that I was ready at once, but he kept putting me off; and whenever he saw me

going up the rigging he always got some one to send for me or to call me, so that it was quite late in the day before I succeeded in getting into the shrouds. The sun had now gone down, the sky was overcast, and the sea had a leaden gloomy look—there was a swell also, and the ship rolled so much from side to side, that, as I looked up and saw the mastheads forming arches in the sky, I could not help fancying that I should be sent off when I got up there like a stone from a sling, or an ancient catapult, right into the water. The idea made me hold on very tight, let me tell you; yet, as it would never do to give it up, on I went with my teeth pretty closely clenched, and my eyes fixed on the top, which seemed to grow farther and farther away from me, like Jack's bean-stalk. At last I got up just under the top. There are two ways of getting on to it. One is by going along some ropes, called the futtock shrouds, when one hangs very much as a fly does crawling along the ceiling. I didn't like it, being up there all alone in the gloom, for it was very different to climbing an apple-tree or the oak-tree at the bottom of the lawn, with our nest on the top of it, where you and I used to sit and smoke cane cigars, and fancy ourselves Istelson and Collingwood. It wasn't pleasant going along the futtock shrouds, and still less getting round them outside into the top, for as the ship rolled it felt as if the mast was coming right down on the top of me. I waited, however, holding on as a cat does to a bough when you shake it, till the ship rolled over the other way, and then up I sprang easily enough, and there I saw Dickey Snookes and Polly and My Lord all standing by the side of the captain of the top, and grinning from ear to ear, as if they had some very good joke in hand. At first I thought that the captain of the top was a very important person, but I soon found that he was only one of the seamen who is more active and smarter than the rest, and takes command of those aloft. "Here comes Midshipman Green," they all exclaimed, as they saw my head appearing between the topmast shrouds. When I stood in the top they all insisted on shaking hands with me, pinching my fingers terribly. "And so you want to see our garden up here," said Snookes; "you're the greenest thing we've got in it just now, let me tell you—ha! ha! ha!"

I didn't see anything to laugh at; but I laughed just to keep them company, thinking the joke was over. However, before I knew what they were about they caught hold of me, and while one blinded my eyes with a handkerchief, I found myself lashed up to the rigging with my arms and legs spread out just like the eagle on a Russian flag. Presently all was silent. The ship kept rolling backwards and forwards as before, and I began to feel somewhat queer in the region of my waistband and right up to

my throat, still I wouldn't cry out. Suddenly I found the bandage whisked off my eyes, and then I could see only one top man standing on the other side of the top, but my messmates had disappeared. I called to the man. He touched his hat with the greatest respect. I told him to cast me loose. "My orders were, sir, not to touch you," he answered. I argued the point. "Well, sir, if as how you pays your footing, I'll do it," he replied; "but, sir, you'll take care that I'm not tied up and get two dozen for disobeying orders." I was ready to promise anything, for it was very unpleasant rolling about up there in the dark. After some hesitation and further talk, Tom Hansard, that was the topman's name, cut off the lashings. I gave him five shillings, all the money I had in my pocket. "You'll keep it secret, sir," said he. "You'll say nothing against a poor fellow like me, sir; that you won't, I know." I promised him, and he then helped me down through the lubber's hole, for as to going down outside, I couldn't just then have done it to save my life. When I got back to the berth, there were all my three messmates seated round the table, taking their tea, and pretending to be very much astonished at hearing all which had happened to me. Of course, I said nothing about Tom Hansard, and they pretended that they could not make out how I had got loose. I found out, however, that the whole plan was arranged beforehand by Dicky Snookes and my other messmates with the captain of the top, just to see what I was made of, and what I would do, it being understood that he was to keep whatever he could get out of me. Had I cried or made a fuss about the matter, or said that I would complain to my uncle, I should have been looked upon as a regular sneak. The fellows hate telling of one another here just as much as we did at school. From the way I took the trick I believe they liked me better than they did before. Of course, all about the garden and the vegetables was nonsense, and I should have been green to have believed it, which I didn't. Away we went rolling along with a westerly swell and a northerly wind, while many of the fellows in the berth were singing: "There we lay, all the day, in the Bay of Biscay, O;" and others "Rule Britannia," old Gregson not forgetting his standing joke of "Bless the old girl; I wish, while she was about it, that she had ruled them straighter." The very next morning the gale, of which the swell was the forerunner, came down upon us with a sudden gust. "All hands shorten sail," was shouted along the decks. The men flew aloft, that is, they climbed up so nimbly that they looked as if they were flying, and they lay out on the yards to reef the sail. Snookes had to go also, as he was stationed in the foretop. "Any greens up there to-day?" I asked as he passed me, not looking happy, for the ship was tumbling about, the spray was flying over us,

and the wind was howling terrifically in the rigging. It was altogether very different to what it had been on the previous evening. Still poor Snookes had to go up. The boatswain's whistle and the voices of the officers sounded loud above the gale, and so did the cries of the midshipmen. I contrived to make myself heard, though, of course, I only sung out what I was told to say, and wasn't always certain what would happen after I had said it, any more than does a person in a fairy tale, who has got hold of some magic words and doesn't know what effect they will produce. The topgallantsails and royals were quickly furled—those are the sails highest up, you know; and then the huge topsails came rattling down the masts, and the men lay out on the yards and caught hold of them, as they were bulging out and flapping fearfully about, to reef them. One of the topmen, Tom Hansard, was at the weather yardarm, and had hold of the earing, which isn't a bit like those gold things our sisters wear in their ears, but is a long rope which helps to reef the sails. Suddenly the ship gave a tremendous lurch, I heard a cry, I looked up, and there was Tom Hansard hanging by one hand to the earing from the yard-arm, right over the foaming ocean. I felt as if I had swallowed a bucket full of snow. I thought the poor fellow must be dropped overboard, and so did everybody else, and some were running to one of the boats to lower her to pick him up. He swung fearfully about from side to side. No human power could save him. I was watching to see him drop, when he made a great effort, and springing up, he caught the rope with his other hand. Still he was only a degree better off. Fancy dangling away at the end of a thin rope, jerked backwards and forwards high up in the air, with certain death were he to fall on board, and very small prospect of escape if he fell into the foaming, tumbling sea, through which the ship was flying at the rate of some ten knots an hour. I felt inclined to shriek out in sympathy, for I am sure that I should have shrieked out, and very loudly too, had I been up there in his place. I felt sure that he would come down when I saw two of the topmen going out to the end of the yard-arm and stretching out their arms towards him to help him. He saw them, and began to climb up the thin rope till they could catch hold of his jacket, then up they pulled him, though the sails flapping about very nearly tore him out of their hands. They held him on to the yard for a minute till he could recover himself, and then he scrambled in on to the top. There was a general shout fore and aft when he was safe. Another man went to the weather earing, and three reefs were taken in the topsails. I heard the first lieutenant observe to Uncle Tom that he was very glad to get the ship snug at last; but I cannot say that I thought her snug, or anything snug about her, for there we were among clouds of

sleet and spray, tumbling and rolling about in that undignified way in which I had not thought it possible so fine a frigate could have been tumbled and rolled about. It brought down the ship a peg or two in my estimation, and took the shine out of many of us, let me tell you. That fellow Snookes was continually offering me a lump of fat bacon, and at dinner he contrived to slip all the most greasy bits into my plate. I held out manfully, and tried to look very heroic, or, at all events, indifferent; but, oh Harry, I did feel very wretched, and began to reflect that I might possibly have been rather happier on shore. I suspect that the way my lips curled, and the yellow look of my eyes, betrayed me. The gale lasted for three days. I was very glad when it was over; so you understand it is not all sunshine at sea.

Story 1—Chapter 3.

The Slaver.

It was reported that we were to touch at one or two places on the coast of Africa, and then to stand across to the Brazils. The first land we made was that near Sierra Leone. I always thought that negroes lived in thatched huts, and wore bits of white cloth round their loins. We brought up before Free Town, the capital of the colony, when what was my surprise to see really a very handsome place, containing between fifteen and twenty thousand inhabitants, the greater number black or brown men, and as well-dressed and comfortable-looking as any white people could be. What is more, they have schools and colleges where they are capitally taught, and all the little black children go to school; so that the truth is, that they are far better educated than are the children of the working classes in many parts of England, and are all just as good Christians as we are. Sommers told me all this, and a great deal more. I haven't spoken about him before. He's a mate—such a good-natured, kind fellow, and is very merry, though he can be very serious; and do you know, when he's in the berth, none of the others, big or little, swear and talk about things they oughtn't to. I like Sommers, and so even does Snookes and My Lord; and he never lets anybody bully Polly when he's near. I think that I should have been bullied a good deal, but I took everything that was said or done in good part, or pretended to be unconscious of it, and lost no opportunity of retorting—good-naturedly of course—it would not have done otherwise. And now, the rest only play the same tricks with me that they do with each other.

No one makes any difference with me because I am the captain's nephew, any more than Uncle Tom does himself. Uncle Tom is very kind, but he makes no difference that I can see between the rest of the midshipmen and me. He does the best that he can for all of us, that is the truth: he punishes all alike if we do wrong, and has us all into the cabin and gives us good advice, and talks to us frequently. Still we do, somehow or other, manage to get into scrapes. I have been mastheaded twice, and Dickey Snookes five times, since we came to sea; once for dressing up the sheep in some of the men's clothes just before the crew were mustered, and then letting them out on the deck; and another time for cutting poor Polly's hammock down by the head, and very nearly cracking his skull—luckily it's rather thick. After leaving Free Town we touched at Monrovia, the capital of Liberia. Have you ever read about that settlement? It was established by the people of the United States, and colonised by men of colour, or blacks, who had been once slaves and had obtained their freedom. It is a republic, and the chief magistrate as well as all the officers are brown or black men. It is not nearly so large nor so flourishing a place as Sierra Leone. In the latter, you see, there are a great many intelligent white men who set the blacks an example of industry and perseverance, in which qualities they are somewhat wanting generally. Still it is wonderful to see what black men can do when left free with a good example before them. Monrovia is really a very respectable-looking city. There are a number of stone warehouses full of goods near the water, and a good many dwelling-houses of brick, nicely furnished, and of two storeys high, but the greater number of the habitations are of wood, on brick foundations. There are several churches, four or five at least, with black or coloured preachers. The greater part of the principal inhabitants are engaged in trade, exchanging palm oil, ivory, cam-wood, which is a valuable dye, for European or American manufactures. They have also a number of vessels manned by Liberian sailors, which sail along the coast to collect the produce of the country. Uncle Tom took me on shore, but we remained only a very short time, so that I cannot give you a more particular account of the place. Leaving the coast of Africa, we stood across the Atlantic towards that of America. We had left the land some four or five days when the wind fell, and we lay becalmed, one side and then the other dipping provokingly into the smooth, glassy, and shining water, and very nearly rolling our masts out. It was so hot, too, that the pitch bubbled up through the seams in the deck, and Dickey Snookes declared we could have roasted our dinners on the capstern-head. I believe, indeed, that we could. I was very glad when the sun went down, and the night came, but it was not so

very much cooler even then, and most of the watch below remained on deck to swallow some fresh air, but very little any one of us benefited by it. The next day, at all events, I thought that we should get a breeze, but it was much the same. Hot! oh, how hot it was! We all went gasping about the decks, not knowing what to do with ourselves, and the sea shone so brightly that it was positively painful to look at it. I daresay that it would have been much worse on shore, for, at all events, the air we breathed was pure and clear, though it was pretty well roasted. It was curious to see the same chips of wood and empty hampers, and all the odds and ends thrown overboard, floating around us day after day. We had been a week thus becalmed when I was sent aloft, as the midshipmen occasionally are, to see what was to be seen. I did not expect to see anything, but I did, and that was a long, thin, dark blue line away to the north-east. I reported it to the officer of the watch. He said it was all right, and that we should have a breeze before long, and ordered the watch to trim sails. The blue line increased in width till it could be seen from the deck, and on it came, growing broader and broader every instant. Sure enough it was a breeze stirring up the surface of the ocean. In a little time the upper sails felt its influence, and then the topsails began to bulge out, and the courses moved, and away we glided through the still smooth water faster than we had done for many a day. For some hours we ran on till a sail was reported right ahead still becalmed. As we drew near we discovered her to be a large topsail schooner, with a very rakish appearance. She was still becalmed, but as we brought the breeze up with us her sails bulged out, and she began to glide through the water. There were many discussions as to what she was; some thought her an honest trader, others a slaver; some said she was American, and others Spanish or Portuguese. "One thing is in her favour," observed old Gregson, "she does not attempt to run away." "Good reason, Greggry," said Dickey Snookes aside to me, "she can't—just see what she will do when she gets the wind!" Though I had never seen a slaver, the stranger came exactly up to my idea of what a slaver was like. We always at sea call a vessel, whose name and country we don't know, a stranger. Still she did not run away even when she got the breeze, but hove her topsail to the mast, and kept bobbing gracefully away at us as we came up, while the stars and stripes of the United States flew out at her peak. All doubts as to the honesty of her character were dissipated when an officer standing at her gangway hailed and asked what frigate we were. The reply was given, and he was asked what schooner that was. "'The Wide Awake,' from New Orleans, bound in for Sierra Leone. Shall be happy to take any letters or packages

you have to send for that settlement, captain," exclaimed the speaker through his trumpet. This was all very polite. Still more so was it when the American skipper offered to send his boat aboard us to receive our despatches. As it happened, the captain had been wishing to send a letter back to Sierra Leone, and several of the officers wished to write, and as the delay would not be great, we told the polite American that we would trouble him. He seemed well pleased, and said that he would get his boat ready, and drop aboard us. I remained on deck watching the schooner, for there is something very attractive to my eye in the movements of another vessel at sea. A boat was after some time lowered from the schooner and pulled towards us, when she filled her fore-topsail, stood a little way on, tacked, and then steered so as to get to windward of us. I saw our first lieutenant watching her very narrowly when she did this, and then looking at her boat. Presently he went into the captain's cabin. He was not there long. When he came out he ordered a boat to be manned, with the crew all armed, and directed the crews of three or four guns on either side to go quietly to their quarters. I saw, meantime, that the American's boat, instead of pulling up alongside, was passing astern of us, so as to meet the schooner, now rapidly approaching our weather quarter. She was still within hearing when the first lieutenant shouted, "Our despatches are ready—come on board!" But the people in the boat pretended not to hear, and pulled on towards the schooner. On this Sommers was ordered to take command of the boat, and to proceed on board the stranger. To my great delight I got leave from Uncle Tom to accompany him. It was very kind—it was the first piece of favouritism he had shown me. Dickey Snookes was quite jealous when he saw me jump into the boat. "Ah, Pringle, you'll get knocked on the head, my boy, depend on that!" was his encouraging observation. Away we pulled towards the schooner. Her boat had reached her, and was hoisted up. We had before not observed more than a dozen or fifteen men at the utmost. There were now more than double that number on her deck, or about her rigging. Every stitch of canvas she could carry was set; her yards were braced sharp up, and away she went like a shot on a bowline. "Give way, my lads, give way!" cried Sommers, and the men did give way, pulling with all their might; but the schooner went through the water much faster than we did, and in spite of all our efforts soon left us far behind. "That was the meaning of all his politeness about the letters—he expected to hoodwink us, did he? the rogue!" exclaimed Sommers. "But though we do not catch him, the frigate will; there is no fear of that!" We pulled on after the schooner some time longer, but Sommers at length saw that

the chase was perfectly hopeless. "The worst of it is, that the frigate will have to heave to to pick us up," he observed. He then asked me if I should mind letting the frigate stand on after the chase, and stand the chance of being picked up when she had caught her. I cannot say that I particularly liked the notion of being left all alone in a boat in the middle of the Atlantic. Still I did not like to say so. However, the captain settled the point by heaving the frigate to as she came up to us, and ordering us to return on board. This we did with as little delay, as possible, when once more the frigate stood on after the schooner. Still the latter had gained a considerable advantage, but she was not beyond the range of our guns, and we now began to fire away at her to make her heave to again. Of course she had no intention of doing this if she could help it. Our shot went flying pretty thickly after her, but still, though several struck her and cut her ropes, and made eyelet holes in her sails, her damages were repaired as quickly as they were produced, and there seemed a considerable chance of her getting away from us altogether.

Story 1—Chapter 4.

The Chase.

Our frigate sails very fast; there are few ships in the service sail faster, and none in most respects to surpass her, or indeed, I really believe, to equal her. I do not know what she cannot do. The boatswain says, and I believe him, that she can do everything but talk. Still, somehow or other, that piccarooning-looking schooner managed to keep ahead of us, and after some time actually ran out of the range of our shot. She was undoubtedly one of the fastest vessels of her class ever built, or it would not have happened. The schooner made a number of short tacks right away in the wind's eye. This would not have suited us, as we took longer to go about, so we had to stretch away to the eastward, while she, tacking once more, stood to the north-west. Sometimes we appeared to be a long way apart, then about we would go and be almost up with her again. What we had to fear was night coming on before we could get up to her, when very probably she would contrive to escape in the dark. Old Gregson watched her moodily. "Of course she will escape," he observed. "She is probably full of slaves, and would prove a rich prize to us. We are not likely to have any luck; no ship has that I'm on board." It seemed probable that in this case, at all events, he would be right. We were all so eager in

watching the chase that none of us felt inclined to go below. The pangs of hunger at dinner-time, however, drove most of us there. We had not got half through the meal before Dickey Snookes made his appearance with the announcement that the schooner's maintopmast had been carried away, and that we should be soon up to her. We all rushed on deck to find matters very much as they were when we went below, and on our return to the berth there was Master Dickey comfortably seated at table, helping himself to the best bits of the boiled beef and duff, and laughing at our simplicity, or, as he remarked, at our being so easily sold. He got a clobbering by the by, as a wind-up to his amusement, after dinner was over. It is an operation by no means over-pleasant to the person on whom it is inflicted. The weapon employed is a handkerchief with a corner knotted; or a stocking, with the end filled with socks, or something to make a hard knot. The patient is laid across the mess-table, and each member of the berth inflicts a blow on a part of his body, over which his clothes are tightly drawn. As the day drew on, the wind increased. Dickey Snookes having been properly clobbered, we all hurried on deck. As we looked through our glasses, we saw that the schooner was staggering along under as much canvas as she could carry; while the frigate glided on with becoming dignity, we having decidedly the advantage in a strong wind. I asked Sommers what he thought about the matter. "We are coming up with her, lad, hand over hand, and if the wind holds she will be under our guns before nightfall," he answered. As you may suppose, I was highly delighted with the thoughts of this, and hoped that I might be sent on board with the prize crew. Still the schooner held on her course, and her determined attempts to escape convinced us more and more that she had good reason for so doing. The evening was now drawing on. We had gained on her very considerably, but still she was sufficiently ahead, should the night prove dark, to escape us. The very idea that she would do so was provoking. Some did not seem to care so much about it as others. Dickey made a joke of the matter, and said how foolish we should all look in the morning when the schooner was nowhere; and Polly was provokingly indifferent. The sun went down, and darkness came on, and very dark it was; and though I looked and looked I could not see the chase, but there were many on board who could, and we began firing away, the flashes of the guns looking very bright through the darkness. At last I saw the schooner's dark hull and masts, like a shadow against the sky, and there then was a cry that her foretopmast was shot away, and our people gave a loud cheer. Directly after this the first lieutenant shouted that she had struck, and we ceased firing. Two boats were ordered away to take possession. The second lieutenant

went in one, and Sommers had command of the other. I jumped into his boat, as if it were a matter of course; and away we pulled toward the schooner. "I guess that you have pretty considerably outmanoeuvred us, gentlemen, but still I don't know, by what right you, or any other men alive, venture on board a free and independent merchantman of the United States of America," said a man who met us at the gangway. "You come on board at your peril!"

"We are well aware of that, friend," answered our lieutenant; "but we must be satisfied that you are an American before we let you go."

Saying this, he led the way on board. By the light of the lanterns we carried, we could see a very ill-looking crew scowling at us, and evidently wishing to heave us overboard. It was lucky that we were all well armed. I daresay that you will fancy I could not have done much, but I could fire off a pistol at all events, which was as likely to kill as that of a bigger fellow—that was one comfort. The man who had hailed us, and pretended to be the captain, had said that the vessel was American. Mr Talbot was only a short time in the cabin when he came out again, and telling us that he had no doubt she was a Portuguese or Brazilian, ordered the hatches, which were closed, to be lifted off. This took us some little time to do. Never shall I forget the horrible stench—the shrieks and cries and groans which ascended from the hold as the hatches were got off. We lowered our lanterns and looked down. There, arranged in rows along the deck, and chained two and two, squatting on their hams, were several hundreds of blacks—men, women, and children. I cannot describe the dreadful faces of despair and horror and suffering which met our view as the light of our lanterns fell on them, while they looked up with their white eyes and black visages imploringly at us. I fancy that they thought we were going to shoot them all; for the Portuguese crew had told them so, in the hopes, should we free them, that they might set upon us and throw us overboard. This amiable intention was frustrated, because Mr Talbot had been on the coast of Africa and was well up to the tricks of the slavers. He consequently would not allow any of the poor wretches to be liberated till all necessary precautions had been taken to prevent them from doing any harm. Our first care was to secure the slaver's crew. They seemed as if inclined to make some resistance; but we pointed to the frigate, which was close to us, and intimated that if they did not behave themselves we should call her to our assistance; so, with no very good grace, they consented to step into one of our boats to be carried on board

the Juno. I was very glad to get rid of them, for I could not help feeling, as I walked about the deck, that any moment they might set upon us and knock us on the head. As soon as they had gone, Mr Talbot sent Sommers and me round the deck with water and farinha; that is the food the blacks are fed on. We had four men with us carrying the provisions. I could not have supposed that human beings, with flesh and blood like ourselves, could have existed in such a horrible condition. In the first place, there was barely four feet between the decks, and that was very high for a slaver; many are only three feet. Even I had to bend down to get along. Close as they could be packed, the poor creatures sat on the bare, hard, dirty deck, without even room to stretch their legs. I almost fainted, and even Sommers and the men had great difficulty in getting along. Oh! how eagerly the poor creatures drank the water when we put it to their mouths, though they did not seem to care much about the food. Many could not even lift up their heads to take the water. Several were dying; and as we put the tin cups to their mouths, even while gazing at us, and, I am sure, feeling grateful, they fell back and died. Many were already dead when we came to them, and there they lay, chained to the living. Sometimes we found that a father had died, leaving two or three small children; sometimes a mother had sunk, leaving an infant still living. Several poor children had died, and it was hard work, and cruel it seemed, to make the poor mothers give up the bodies to be thrown overboard. We came to one black lad, who was sitting by the side of a woman, whom we guessed must be his mother. Sommers said that he thought she had not many minutes to live. The poor fellow seemed so grateful when we gave her some water and food, which revived her somewhat. I never saw a greater change in anybody's countenance. He was at first the very picture of misery and despair. Then he thought that she was going to recover. He looked up as if he could almost have worshipped us, with a smile which, though his countenance was black, was full of expression. We knocked off her chains, and then those of the lad, and Sommers directed one of the men to assist me in carrying her on deck. There were many in as deplorable a condition as this poor woman, and I scarcely know why it was I felt so anxious to assist her, except on account of her son; there was something in his face which had so interested me. When we got her on deck, she sat up but she could not reply to her son, who, with tears in his eyes, spoke to her, imploring her, it seemed, to answer him. The surgeon and assistant-surgeons had by this time come on board. I begged the first to come and look at the poor woman before he went below. When I returned, she had sunk back in her son's arms. Our kind

doctor took her hand—"It's all over with her; I can do nothing. The poor lad will find it out," he observed, and then he had to hurry below. It was some time before the poor lad could believe that his mother was dead, and then he burst into such a fit of tears that I thought he would have died himself. It convinced me that negroes have got hearts just like ours, though Dickey Snookes always declares they have not, and that they once had tails, which is all nonsense. We had now a strong body of seamen on board, and they kept bringing up the negroes from below—men, women, and children. Several were dead, and two or three had been dead for a couple of days or more. One poor woman had kept the dead body of her child, pretending that it was alive, nor bearing to part with it, till she herself fell sick. At length it was taken from her, but she died as soon as she was brought on deck. In spite of all the doctors could do, many others died also. It was daylight before we got the slave hold in anything like order. As soon as the sun rose, up went the glorious flag of old England, and from that moment every negro on board was free. It is a proud thing to feel that not for a moment can a man remain a slave who rests under the shadow of that time-honoured banner. The instant the slave, whatever his country, sets foot on British soil, he is free, or placed under the protection of the British flag. It is a thing to be proud of. Of that I am certain. Not for a long time, however, could we persuade the poor slaves that we meant them well, and were doing all we could for their benefit. When they once were convinced of this, they gave us their unlimited confidence. We were then able to trust about a third at a time on deck, to enable us to clean out the hold. It was not so much that we had reason to be on our guard against what the negroes could do to us, as to prevent them from injuring themselves. Mr Talbot had ordered about fifty to be brought on deck soon after daylight. He had their irons knocked off, and water and brushes were given them that they might clean themselves. No sooner, however, did two of them find themselves free, than, before anybody could prevent them, they leaped overboard. One poor fellow sunk at once, and disappeared from our sight; the other seemed to repent of the act, and swam to regain the schooner. I, with others, instantly leaped into one of the boats alongside to go and pick him up. Just as we were shoving off, I saw a black triangular fin sticking up above the surface dart from under the counter. We shouted and splashed the oars as we pulled with all our might towards the poor fellow. There was a terrible shriek; he gave one imploring gaze at us as he threw up his arms and sank from view. We could see him going rapidly down, with a large dark object below him, while a red circle came up and filled the eddy he had made. "Jack Shark musters

pretty thick about here," observed the coxswain; "he knows well enough when he's likely to have a feast." It was very dreadful, but, do you know, it is extraordinary how little one feels those sort of things at the time. When I got on board I looked about for the poor lad whose mother had died. I found him still sitting by her body. That had to be taken from him, and then he was left alone. He seemed not to know or to care for any of the other blacks, but when I spoke to him he knelt down and kissed my hand, and said some words which I thought meant—"You'll be kind to me and take care of me. I know you will. I'll trust to you." I do not know whether this was really what he said or not, but, at all events, I determined to do my best, and to be a friend to him. Slavers, when captured, are usually sent into Sierra Leone to be condemned, when the slaves are set free, and the vessels are sold. On examining our prize, however, it was discovered that she had but a short allowance of water and farinha, or provisions of any sort; and as the wind was fair for Rio de Janeiro, and contrary for Sierra Leone, the captain decided on carrying her to the former place, or to some other port on the Brazilian coast, where she might obtain a sufficient supply of necessaries, which we could not afford to give her from the frigate. Sommers was appointed to command the prize, and I was not a little gratified when he obtained leave to take me with him. My traps were soon on board, and we then shaped a course for Rio de Janeiro.

Story 1—Chapter 5.

Peter Pongo.

I forgot to say that Dickey Snookes was sent on board the prize to keep me company. He told me that the captain had called him into the cabin, and given him a long lecture about playing tricks, and that he had made up his mind to behave very circumspectly. I doubted that he would keep very long to his good resolution. I felt excessively proud when I first walked the deck of the prize as officer of the watch, though that fellow Snookes would declare that the old quartermaster who kept it with me was my dry-nurse, and that I was a mere make-believe. I know that I kept pacing up and down on the weather side of the quarter-deck with great dignity, looking up at the sails, and every now and then giving a glance at the compass, to assure myself that the man at the helm was steering a proper course. I should like to know what officer in the service, under the circumstances, could do more. We were ordered to

keep the frigate always in sight, and as the prize sailed well, we had little difficulty in doing that. In the day time we collected the poor blacks to come on deck in fifties at a time, and walk up and down. We had a black man on board the frigate, who was now sent with us, and he understood the language of some of the slaves. I had not forgotten the poor boy whose mother I had seen die, and I got permission for him to attend at our mess. The other black seaman was able to explain to him what he had to do, and I set to work to teach him English. He learned with surprising rapidity, and could soon exchange words with me. I wished to give him a name, and succeeded in learning that his native one was Pongo. He, of course, had no Christian name, so I proposed calling him Peter, and he was always afterwards known as Peter Pongo. He soon became a capital servant, though he did now and then make curious mistakes. Once he brought our soup into the cabin in a wash-bowl, and another time emptied into a pail two bottles of wine which he had been ordered to cool in water. Snookes was for punishing him, but I saved the poor fellow, as I was certain that he had not done either of the things being aware of their incorrectness. He exhibited, in consequence, the greatest gratitude towards me, and evidently looked up to me as his friend and protector. He improved rapidly in his knowledge of English, and by the time we drew near the coast of South America he was able to explain himself with tolerable clearness. With the aid of the negro seaman I spoke of, I got somewhat of poor Peter Pongo's simple history out of him. I cannot put it in his words, for though at the time I could understand them, yet you certainly would not if I wrote them down. One day I had gone forward, and when seated on the fore-castle, under the shade of the fore-staysail, I listened to his narrative. "Ah! Massa Pringle, my country very good," he began. He always called me Pringle, for he could not manage to pronounce my surname. "Plenty yams there—plenty dengè—plenty corn—plenty sheep—tall trees—high mountains—water come gushing out of rocks up among clouds—so cool with foam—loud roar—make grass grow—bright ponds—many animals come and drink. Ah! no country like mine. My father have good house too—very warm—very cool—no rain come in—all built round square—high roof, hang long way over wall—room for walk up and down under it. Dere we all sit in middle of square, listen to stories—now we laugh, now we cry—sun go down, moon get up—star twinkle in dark sky, all so bright—still we talk—talk on—tell long stories—so happy—laugh still more. Ah! what is dat? Dreadful shriek—shriek—shriek—guns fire—we all start up—some run one way, some anoder—house on fire—flames rise up—fierce men come in—cut down some—kill—kill—take women, children—many young men—

some fight—dey all killed—my father killed—mother, brother, and me all carried away together—hands tied behind our backs—hundreds—hundreds poor people, all drive away towards coast—then with long sticks and whips drive along—walk, walk—foot so sore—sleep at night under tree—all chained—up again before sun—walk, walk on all day—cruel men beat us—some grow sick. My brother, him grow sick—lie down under tree—men beat him with stick—he look up—say, Oh, no beat me—give one sigh, fall back and die. Dere he stay—many die like him—some lie down, and men beat him up again. On we go—see at last blue ocean—put into Barracoon—all chained to iron bar—no move one side nor oder—wait dere many days. Ship with white sail come at last—we all put on raft—carried to ship. Oh, how many—more, more come—ship no hold them—many sick—many die—thrown overboard—shark eat them. On we sail—oh, how hot—more, more die—many days no more—float on water like one log—den you come—white man, Spaniard, say you kill us—ah, no, no—you very good—we very happy—yes, massa, Peter Pongo very happy now.” Such was Peter’s brief account of himself. You will not consider it too much of a rigmarole. I was, I know, much interested when he told it me, and I had some little difficulty in making out what he meant. Soon after this we entered the magnificent harbour of Rio de Janeiro, which looks like a lake surrounded by lofty hills, the curious sugar-loaf rising above all. I have heard it said that it would contain all the ships in the world; but, large as it is, I have an idea that they would be very close packed if they were all brought together there. The city is large, built on level ground, or rather on a swamp, with mountains covered with trees rising directly behind it. There are numerous churches and fine palaces, and many large public buildings, but the white inhabitants are very brown and dirty, and the black, who seem to be very numerous, wear a remarkably small amount of clothing. Though the greater number are slaves, they are very merry slaves, and it was amusing to see one party meet another. They would stop, pull off their straw hats, make a series of mock polite bows, and some remarks which were sure to produce roars of laughter; how they would twist and turn about, and at last lean against each other’s backs, that they might more at their ease indulge in fresh cachinnations. I have never seen any but blacks twist themselves into such curious attitudes. I cannot give a more lucid account of this imperial city, because I was so very little on shore. We had a great deal of work in getting the schooner refitted. All the poor blacks were taken on board the frigate, for we could not trust them on shore lest the Brazilians might have spirited them away, while the schooner was thoroughly cleansed and fumigated. We then took

in an ample supply of water and provisions, and prepared to recross the Atlantic. The Brazilians could not understand why we took so much trouble about a few miserable blacks, and thought that we should have done much more wisely had we sold them to them at half-price. Mr Talbot had still charge of the prize, and having Sommers as his lieutenant, with Dickey Snookes and me, he was ordered to carry her back to Sierra Leone. We flattered ourselves that both My Lord and Polly looked at us with a considerable amount of envy as we wished them farewell.

Story 1—Chapter 6.

Overboard.

Once more we were at sea. Had it not been for the honour of the thing, we should have preferred being on board the frigate, for although I have a great respect for many Africans, I must say that it is not agreeable to have some hundreds of them as shipmates. We had happily very fine weather, and the poor people were able constantly to take the air on deck. They seemed to have forgotten all their sufferings and miseries, and would sing and dance and tell stories, and laugh all day long. I still continued to take Peter Pongo in hand, and began to teach him not only to speak but to read and write English. Snookes used to laugh at me at first, but when he saw the progress Peter made he wanted to teach him likewise. To this I said No, he might try and teach some one else, but he was not to interfere with my pupil. He agreed to this, but either he selected a stupid subject, or his mode of teaching was not good, for he made wonderfully little progress. For a week he was trying to teach his pupil Tommy Toad, as he called him, three letters of the alphabet, and at the end of the time he could not tell B from C. Mr Talbot took care also that we should not be idle, and kept us knotting and splicing and doing all sorts of work aloft. We were approaching our port, and were congratulating ourselves on having made a favourable passage, when two of our men were taken sick, then another and another, till our strength was sadly reduced. One poor fellow died, and there appeared every prospect of our losing more. The negroes were generally ready enough to work, but as they did not know how, they were of little use. Mr Talbot and Sommers worked away most heroically, attending to the sick, pulling and hauling, and often steering the vessel. Dickey and I did our best to help them. While the fine weather lasted our difficulties were not very great; at the same

time, we were so short handed that the labour fell heavily on those who remained well. Dickey and I, though not very big or strong, from going constantly aloft, were of no little use, we flattered ourselves. One evening as we were approaching our destination, being closed hauled under all sail and standing on our course—Sommers was at the helm, Mr Talbot was below, and Dickey and I with two men were on deck, all we could muster for the watch—Sommers kept looking anxiously round the horizon, especially to the southward, where I observed some dark clouds banking up. As I watched them, they seemed suddenly to take it into their heads to roll rapidly onward, and down they bore upon us like a flock of sheep scouring over the downs. "All hands shorten sail," shouted Sommers. "Stafford. Rushforth, aloft lads, and furl the fore-topgallantsail." Up we sprang into the rigging. As yet the breeze was very light, and there was no difficulty in what we had to do, but a few minutes' delay might make the task impracticable. Dickey was spirited enough in reality. We lay along on the yard, and had begun to haul the sail, when, as I was stretching over to get a hold of the canvas to gather it up, I lost my balance, and over I went head first. I heard a shriek. It was from Dickey. He thought I should be killed. So should I, if I had had time to think about the matter; but providentially at that moment a sudden puff of wind bulged out the foretopsail to its utmost extent, and I striking it at the moment, away it sent me, as from a catapult, right over the bows, clear of the vessel. Had I struck the deck or bulwarks I should have been killed. I sank, but quickly coming to the surface, looked about me with very little hope of being saved, for there was the schooner flying on before the fast-increasing gale; and as I knew full well, with so few seamen on board, that it would take some time to put about to come to my relief. All this flashed rapidly through my mind. Farther and farther away flew the schooner, still I determined not to give in. I could swim pretty well, and I managed to throw off my jacket and kick off my shoes, and as only a thin pair of trousers and a shirt remained, I had no difficulty in keeping myself above water; but the knowledge that sharks abounded in those seas, and that any moment one of those horrid monsters might catch hold of my leg and haul me down, gave me very unpleasant sensations. I watched the receding vessel—moments seemed hours. There was no sign of her putting about. I at length was about to give way to despair, when my eye fell on an object floating between her and me. It was of some size—a grating I concluded—and I made out a black ball on the other side of it. The grating was moving towards me. I struck out to make it, and then I saw that it was pushed by a negro. "Keep up, Massa Pringle, keep up," said a voice in a cheery tone, which I recognised as that of

Peter Pongo. My spirits returned. I had been a careless, thoughtless fellow, but I prayed then as I never prayed before, that the dreadful sharks might be kept from me, that I might reach the grating, and might by some means or other be saved. I felt a strength and courage I had not felt before. I struck out with all my power, still it seemed very very long before I reached the grating, and in my agitation I almost sank as I was catching hold of it. Peter Pongo had, however, sprang on to it and caught hold of me. I soon recovered. Words enough did not just then come into my head to thank him, but I took his hand, and he understood me. So far I was safe, for the grating was large enough to hold us both, but the sea was rapidly rising, and we might easily again be washed off. We looked about us, the schooner had not yet tacked, and the squall had already caught her. She was heeling over on her beam-ends, and everything seemed in confusion on board—yards swinging about, ropes flying away, and sails shivering to tatters. It was late in the evening, the sky was obscured, and darkness was coming on. The seas, too, began to dance wildly about us; their white tops, curling over and leaving dark cavern-looking hollows underneath, into which it seemed every instant that we must glide and be swallowed up. The prospect altogether was gloomy in the extreme. I felt how much I owed to poor Peter Pongo, who had voluntarily exposed himself to it for my sake, and I felt that had he not done so, I should long before this have been numbered with the dead. I still thought that we should both be saved. There were some bits of rope fastened to the grating, and by these we lashed ourselves to it, or we should inevitably have been washed off. We were constantly under water, but as it was warm that did not signify, as we soon again came to the surface. Our fear was lest some hungry shark should make a dart at us on those occasions and pick us off. Darker and darker it grew, the seas as they dashed wildly about made a loud prolonged roar, and at last, as we cast our eyes forward, not a glimpse of the schooner could we see. As the conviction of our forlorn condition broke upon me—I could not help it—I gave way to tears. I could not wring my hands because they were busy holding on to the grating. I thought of you, mother, and papa, and dear Harry, and our sisters, and that I should never see you any more; or old England, or the Hall, or Uncle Tom, or any of my friends. Peter wasn't so unhappy, because he had no friends remaining, and his native village was in ruins. The darkness came thicker and thicker down upon us. Nothing could we see but the dark waves rising up on every side against the sky. Not a star was visible. We no longer, indeed, knew in which direction to look for the schooner. It appeared, I remember exactly, as if we were being tossed about inside a black ball. I

could not calculate how long a time had passed since I had fallen overboard, when I began to feel very hungry. I had had a bit of biscuit in my pocket, but that had been lost with my jacket, and now I had nothing to eat. I bore it for some time, and then I felt very faint, and thought that I could not possibly hold on any longer. Still I did my best not to let go, and every now and then Peter spoke to me and encouraged me, "Neber fear, massa," said he. "Him you tell me of, live up in sky, Him watch over us." We did not speak much, however; we could not, I do not know why. Oh, that was a dreary, awful night, not likely to be forgotten! Yet here I am alive. I shall never despair after that, and shall always feel, in however terrible a position I am placed, that a merciful God is watching over me, and that He will find means to save me.

Story 1—Chapter 7.

Cause for Gratitude.

The longest night must come to an end. Many people, when kept awake in a comfortable bed with the toothache or some other pain, or perhaps with a little fever, think themselves very miserable, and much to be pitied. Peter Pongo and I were rather worse off, tossing about on the grating out on the Atlantic there, not having anything to eat, and not knowing any moment when we might be washed away from our unsteady raft. How we held on during all that night I cannot tell. The light came at last. We knew where the east was by seeing a bright red streak in the sky. We kept our eyes turned eagerly in that direction, for we fancied that there we should see the schooner. Our view, however, was very much circumscribed, and it was only as we were tossed up to the top of a sea that we could obtain even a glimpse of the horizon. We had scarcely time to assure ourselves whether or not there was a sail there before either a foam-topped sea jumped up before us, or we sank down again into the trough. We gazed, but we gazed in vain. No sail was to be seen. In spite of our almost hopeless position we became very hungry, and, what was worse, thirsty also. As the sun rose and struck down on our heads my thirst increased. I felt certain that I could not hold on much longer. Peter Pongo did not care so much about the hot sun, but he was very hungry. Suddenly I saw some red objects floating near us in the water. I looked again. Oh, how eager I felt to get them—they were oranges. They were too far off to reach. I was afraid to quit the grating. I had no strength left to swim. No sooner did Peter see them than

he slid off the raft, and swimming round them collected a dozen or more before him, and pushing them on enabled me to pick them out of the water. I felt greatly relieved when he was once more safe on the grating. Oh, how delicious those oranges were! They were the means, I doubt not, of preserving our lives. They quenched our thirst, but they could not stop the pangs of hunger. The sun rose higher and higher, till we guessed it was noon. The wind went down, but the sea still continued to tumble us about most uncomfortably. Both of us were becoming very drowsy when we started up—a loud shout sounded in our ears. "Why, lads, you keep a bad look-out on board your craft," said a voice. We looked up—a large ship was passing us. "Don't fear—we'll pick you up," said the former speaker. I heard the cry of "helm's alee!" The yards swung round, and the ship was rounded too. By that time she seemed to have got a long way from us. Presently, however, we saw a boat dashing among the seas towards us. I thought that her bow would have come right down on our raft, but just then I felt a strong arm grasp me by the shoulder, and haul me in, while Peter was treated in the same way, and we were quickly alongside the ship. We were lifted on board. She appeared full of people, who looked very kindly at us. At first I could not speak a word; I did not know why. I thought that I was going to say something, but no sound was produced. The people who stood round remarked that I was a foreigner, and two or three people came up and addressed me in strange languages, but of course I was not more likely to answer them than I was my own countrymen. At last I heard Peter Pongo, who had been much concerned at my silence, say, "Him officer—speakie by and by." This remark seemed to satisfy those present, and in about an hour I was able to sit up and explain what had happened. I found that we had been rescued by an emigrant ship bound for the Cape of Good Hope. I was in hope that she might be able to land us at Sierra Leone, but I found that she could not possibly go out of her course; indeed, that we were much to the southward of that place, and that on to the Cape we also must go. In a very few minutes I became, I must own, reconciled to the necessity. When the cabin passengers found that I was a midshipman they rigged me out in very comfortable clothes, and clubbing together presented me with a sum of money, as they said, to enable me to live comfortably, till I could find my way back to my ship. When, also, they heard how gallantly Peter Pongo had rescued me, they gave him a handsome present. He could scarcely comprehend his good fortune, and as he looked at the money he evidently thought himself the owner of boundless wealth. I had the best of everything at the chief cabin table, and could not help thinking how pleasant it would

be to live the life of a passenger on board an emigrant ship all the year round. I was therefore very much surprised to hear some of them grumbling from morning to night, complaining of having nothing to do, and wishing that the voyage was over. If they had lived in a midshipman's berth for a few months, I rather suspect that they would have thought themselves well off. I need not describe our passage to the Cape; it was a very pleasant one. I was very happy during the short time I remained at that curious old Dutch place, Cape Town. I saw the table-mountain and the tablecloth on the top of it, and then a sloop of war called there, and the commodore, who was there, ordered me and Peter Pongo a passage back to Sierra Leone. I was never idle, for I found ample employment in teaching Peter to read, and wonderful was the progress he made. He was a great favourite on board the corvette on account of his intelligence and amiable manners, and the gallant way in which he had preserved my life. On entering the harbour of Sierra Leone, there, to my great satisfaction, lay our schooner, with the pennant flying at her masthead, and the British ensign at her peak. I got a boat from the corvette, and at once pulled on board. I could see at a glance that the schooner had been turned into a man-of-war. She had been bought, as I afterwards found, into the service. I was in plain clothes, and Peter Pongo who accompanied me, was very nicely dressed, and no one would have recognised him as the little slave boy he had before appeared. Dickey Snookes looked over the side. I sprang up the side. "What do you want?" he asked. "To see that very important personage, Mr Algernon Godolphin Stafford, commonly known as Dickey Snookes," I answered, taking his hand. He started, and looked at me very hard, really gasping for breath, so astonished was he. "What! is it you yourself, Rushforth, my dear fellow?" he exclaimed. "I am indeed glad. We thought you were lost; gobbled up by a shark, or sunk to the bottom of the sea. Here, Sommers—here's Rushforth come to life again, and the black boy too." Sommers, who was below, came on deck, and received me most cordially. Mr Talbot, who had command of the schooner, now called the Liberia, was on shore. She was to sail, I found, the very next day for Rio Janeiro, to act as a tender to our ship. I consulted with Sommers what would be most to the advantage of Peter Pongo to do. He strongly advised his going to the college at Sierra Leone, where he would receive a very good education, and he undertook to arrange the matter. I had still the greater part of the money given me by the passengers of the emigrant ship, which I had kept for the purpose of devoting it to Peter's use. This, with what he had of his own, would enable him to make a fair start in life. Peter himself, though very sorry to leave me,

was much pleased with the proposal. That very afternoon he and I accompanied Sommers on shore, when the whole matter was arranged in a very satisfactory way with some of the gentlemen connected with the college, who undertook to invest the sum I have mentioned for Peter's benefit. Peter burst into tears as I wished him good-bye, and I felt a very curious sensation about the throat. The next day we sailed for Rio.

Story 1—Chapter 8.

Conclusion.

We had a fast run across the Atlantic. The news of my supposed loss had reached the frigate, and the kind way in which my uncle and the gun-room officers, as well as my messmates, received me, showed me that I had been regretted—of course a midshipman cannot expect to create any very great sorrow when he loses the number of his mess, as an admiral or a post-captain would. I did not meet with any other very extraordinary adventures during the remainder of the four years the frigate was in commission. I found the South American station a very pleasant one. I might have found Rio dull, but that I was constantly sent away in the *Liberia*, which did good service by capturing several slavers. We used to make her look like what she formerly was, and in that way she acted as a decoy, and entrapped several slavers who approached her without suspicion. We had one long trip round Cape Horn, and visited the coast of Chili and Peru. That was the most interesting we took. I feel that I have a right to be considered something of a sailor after having doubled Cape Horn, and crossed and re-crossed the Line. At length the frigate was ordered home; the schooner remained at Rio to do duty as before as a tender. On our way we touched at Sierra Leone. My uncle gave me leave to go on shore. I hurried off to the college, for I was anxious to hear something of my old friend and the preserver of my life. Three years had passed since I had seen him. He was then little more than fourteen. I was shown into a room where several pupil teachers were engaged in giving instruction to a number of young lads and boys. One teacher was evidently taking the lead of the rest. In very eloquent language he was explaining the truths of Christianity to a class of most attentive listeners. Though the skin of the speaker was black, the voice was that of an educated Englishman. I waited till he had ceased speaking. There is Mr Pongo, said the person who had conducted me to the room. His eye brightened as he saw me, and in an instant

springing from his desk his hands were warmly pressed in mine. What immense progress he has made! how little I have advanced since we parted! I thought as I looked at him and heard him describe his work. I felt humbled and ashamed of myself. I thought over the matter, and resolved in future to employ my time, as far as I had the power, to the advantage of myself as well as that of others. Pongo came on board the frigate, and was received most kindly by my uncle and all the officers. He was, I found, training to become a missionary of the Gospel among his countrymen, and hoped ultimately to be ordained. I have since frequently heard from him. We spent only three days at Sierra Leone, and arrived at last safely in old England, and thus ended my first cruise.

Story 2—Chapter 1.

The Travelling Tin-Man, Founded on Fact, by Miss Leslie.

Micajah Warner was owner and cultivator of a small farm in one of the oldest, most fertile, and most beautiful counties of the State of Pennsylvania, not far from Maryland line. Micajah was a plain Quaker, and a man of quiet and primitive habits. He was totally devoid of all ambitious cravings after tracts of ten thousand acres, and he aspired not to the honour and glory of having his name given to a town in the western wilderness (though Warnerville would not have sounded badly), neither was he possessed of an unconquerable desire of becoming a judge, or of going to Congress. Therefore, he had always been able to resist the persuasions and example of those of his neighbours who left the home of their fathers, and the comforts of an old settlement, to seek a less tedious road to wealth and consequence, on the other side of the Allegany. He was satisfied with the possession of two hundred acres, one half of which he had lent (not given) to his son Israel, who expected shortly to be married to a very pretty and notable young woman in the neighbourhood, who was, however, no heiress. Upon this event, Israel was to be established in an old frame-house that had long since been abandoned by his father in favour of the substantial stone dwelling which the family occupied at the period of our story. The house had been taken up and transplanted to that part of the farm now allotted to Israel, and he very prudently deferred repairing it till he saw whether it survived its progress across the domain. But as it did not fall asunder during the journey, it was judged worthy of a new front-door, new window-panes, and new shingles to cover the vast chasms of the roof,

all which improvements were made by Israel's own hands. This house was deposited in the vicinity of the upper branch of the creek, and conveniently near to a saw-mill, which had been built by Israel in person.

Like all of her sect, whether in town or country, Bulah, the wife of Micajah Warner, was a woman of even temper, untiring industry, and great skill in housewifery.

Her daughters, commonly called Amy and Orphy, were neat pretty little Quaker girls, extremely alert, and accustomed from their earliest childhood to assist in the work of the house. As her daughters were so handy and industrious, and only went half the year to school, Mrs Warner did not think it necessary to keep any other help than an indentured negro girl, named Chloe.

Except the marriage of Israel, which was now in prospect; a flood in the neighbouring creek, which had raised the water so high as to wash away the brick oven from the side of the house; a tornado that carried off the roof of the old stable, and landed it whole in an adjoining clover field; and a visit from a family of beggars (an extraordinary phenomenon in the country), nothing occurred among the Warners for a long succession of years that had occasioned more than a month's talk of the mother, and a month's listening of the children.

"They kept the noiseless tenor of their way."

The occupations of Israel and his father (assisted occasionally by a few hired men) were, of course, those of the farm, except when Israel took a day now and then to attend to his saw-mill. With regard to domestic arrangements, everything connected with household affairs went on in the same course year after year except that, as the daughters of the family improved in capability of work, Chloe the black girl, retrograded. They washed on Monday (with the assistance of a woman, hired for the day), ironed on Tuesday, performed what they called "the little baking" on Wednesday, and "the big baking" on Friday; cleaned the house on Saturday, and clear-starched their book-muslin collars; rode on horseback to Friends' meeting on Sunday morning, and visited their neighbours on Sunday afternoon.

It was the day after the one on which Israel and his bride-elect had passed meeting, and consequently, a month before the one fixed for the wedding, that something like an adventure fell among the Warner family.

It was a beautiful evening at the close of August. The father and son had been all day in the meadows, mowing the second crop of grass; Mrs Warner was darning stockings in the porch, with her two daughters knitting on the bench beside her; Amy being then fourteen, and Orphy about twelve. Chloe was absent, having been borrowed by a relation, about five miles off, to do the general work of the house, while the family were engaged in preparing for a quilting frolic.

"Come, girls," said Mrs Warner to her daughter, "it's just sun-down. The geese are coming home, and daddy and Israel will soon be here. Amy, do thee go down to the spring-house, and bring up the milk and butter, and Orphy, thee can set the table."

The two girls put up their knitting (not, however, till they had knit to the middle of the needle), and in a short time, Amy was seen coming back from the spring-house, with a large pitcher of milk and a plate of butter. In the meantime, Orphy had drawn out the ponderous claw-footed walnut table that stood all summer in the porch, and spreading over it a brown linen cloth, placed in regular order their everyday supper equipage of pewter plates, earthen porringers, and iron spoons.

The viands consisted of an immense round loaf of bread, nearly as large as a grindstone, and made of wheat and Indian meal, the half of a huge cheese, a piece of cold pork, a peach pie, an apple pie, and, as it had been baking day, there was the customary addition of a rice pudding, in an earthen pan of stupendous size. The last finish of the decorations of the table was a large bowl of cool water, placed near the seat occupied by the father of the family, who never could begin any of his meals without a copious draught of the pure element.

In a few minutes, the farmer and his son made their appearance as they turned the angle of the peach-orchard fence, preceded by the geese, their usual *avant-couriers*, who went out every morning to feed in an old field beyond the meadows.

As soon as Micajah and Israel had hung up their scythes and washed themselves at the pump, they sat down to table, the farmer in his own blue-painted, high-backed, high-armed chair, and Israel taking the seat always allotted to him—a low chair, the rushes of which having long since deserted the bottom, had been replaced by cross pieces of cloth listing, ingeniously interwoven with each other; and this being, according to the general opinion, the worst seat in the house, always fell to the

share of the young man, who was usually passive on all occasions, and never seemed to consider himself entitled to the same accommodation as the rest of the family.

Suddenly, the shrill blast of a tin trumpet resounded through the woods, that covered the hill in front of the house, to the great disturbance of the geese, who had settled themselves quietly for the night in their usual bivouac around the ruins of an old waggon. The Warners ceased their supper to listen and look; and they saw emerging from the woods, and rolling down the hill at a brisk trot, the cart of one of those itinerant tin merchants, who originate in New England, and travel from one end of the Union to the other, avoiding the cities, and seeking customers amongst the country people; who, besides buying their ware, always invite them to a meal and a bed.

The tinman came blowing his horn to the steps of the porch, and there stopping his cart, addressed the farmer's wife in the true nasal twang that characterises the lower class of New Englanders, and inquired "if she had any notion of a bargain."

She replied that "she believed she had no occasion for anything"—her customary answer to all such questions.

But Israel, who looked into futurity, and entertained views towards his own housekeeping, stepped forward to the tin-cart, and began to take down and examine various mugs, pans, kettles, and coffee-pots—the latter particularly, as he had a passion for coffee, which he secretly determined to indulge both morning and evening, as soon as he was settled in his domicile.

"Mother," said Amy, "I do wish thee would buy a new coffee-pot, for ours has been leaking all summer, and I have to stop it every morning with rye-meal. Thee knows we can give the old one to Israel."

"To be sure," replied Mrs Warner, "it will do well enough for young beginners. But I cannot say I feel quite free to buy a new coffee-pot at this time. I must consider about it."

"And there's the cullender," said Orphy, "it has such a big crack at the bottom, that when I am smashing the squashes for dinner, not only the water, but the squashes themselves drip through. Better give it to Israel, and get a new one for ourselves. What's this?" she continued, taking up a tin water-dipper.

"That is for dipping warter out of the bucket," replied the tinman.

"Oh, yes," cried Amy, "I've seen such a one at Rachel Johnson's. What a clever thing it is, with a good long handle, so that there's no danger of splashing the water on our clothes. Do buy it, mother. Thee knows that Israel can have the big calabash: I patched it myself, yesterday, where it was broken, and bound the edge with new tape, and it's now as good as ever."

"I don't know," said the farmer, "that we want anything but a new lantern; for ours had the socket burnt out long before these moonlight nights, and it's dangerous work taking a candle into the stable."

The tinman knowing that our plain old farmers, though extremely liberal of everything that is produced on their plantations, are, frequently, very tenacious of coin, and much averse to parting with actual money, recommended his wares more on account of their cheapness than their goodness; and, in fact, the price of most of the articles was two or three cents lower than they could be purchased for at the stores.

Old Micajah thought there was no actual necessity for anything except the lantern; but his daughters were so importunate for the coffee-pot, the cullender, and the water-dipper, that finally all three were purchased and paid for. The tinman in vain endeavoured to prevail on Mrs Warner to buy some patty-pans, which the girls looked at with longing eyes; and he reminded them how pretty the pumpkin pies would look at their next quilting, baked in scollop-edged tins. But this purchase was peremptorily refused by the good Quaker woman, alleging that scollop-edged pies were all pride and vanity, and that, if properly made, they were quite good enough baked in round plates.

The travelling merchant then produced divers boxes and phials of quack medicines, prepared at a celebrated manufactory of those articles, and duly sealed with the maker's own seal, and inscribed with his name in his own handwriting. Amongst these, he said, "there were certain cures for every complaint in natur'—draps for the agur, the toothache, and the rhumatiz; salves for ringworms, corns, frostbitten heels, and sore eyes; and pills for consumption and fall fevers; beside that most valuable of all physic, Swain's Wormifuge."

The young people exclaimed with one accord against the purchase of any of the medicines; and business being over, the tinman was invited by the farmer to sit down and take his supper with the family—an invitation as freely accepted as given.

The twilight was now closing, but the full moon had risen, and afforded sufficient light for the supper table in the porch. The tinman took a seat, and before Mrs Warner had finished her usual invitation to strangers, of—"reach to, and help thyself; we are poor hands at inviting, but thee's welcome to it, such as it is"—he had already cut himself a huge piece of the cold pork, and an enormous slice of bread. He next poured out a porringer of milk, to which he afterwards added one-third of the peach pie, and several platesful of rice pudding. He then said, "I suppose you haven't got no cider about the house;" and Israel, at his father's request, immediately brought up a pitcher of that liquor from the cellar.

During supper the tinman entertained his entertainers with anecdotes of the roguery of his own countrymen, or rather, as he called them, his "statesmen." In his opinion of their general dishonesty, Mrs Warner most cordially joined. She related a story of an itinerant Yankee who persuaded her to empty some of her pillows and bolsters, under colour of exchanging with him old feathers for new; a thing which she acknowledged had puzzled her not a little, as she thought it strange that any man should bargain so badly for himself. He produced from his cart a bag of feathers which he declared were quite new; but after his departure she found that he had given her such short measure that she had not half enough to fill her ticking, and most of the feathers were proved, upon examination, to have belonged to chickens rather than to geese—nearly a whole cock's tail having been found amongst them.

The farmer pointed into the open door of the house, and showed the tinman a large wooden clock put up without a case between two windows, the pendulum and the weights being "exposed and bare." This clock he had bought for ten dollars of a travelling Yankee, who had set out to supply the country with machines. It had only kept tolerable time for about two months, and had ever since been getting faster and faster, though it was still faithfully wound up every week. The hands were now going merrily round at the rate of ten miles an hour, and it never struck less than twelve.

The Yankee tinman, with a candour that excited the admiration of the whole family, acknowledged that his Statesmen were the

greatest rogues "on the face of the yearth;" and recounted instances of their trickery that would have startled the belief of any but the inexperienced and credulous people who were now listening to him. He told, for example, of sausages being brought to market in an eastern town, that, when purchased and prepared for frying, were found to be filled with chopped turnip and shreds of red flannel.

For once, thought the Warners, we have found an honest Yankee.

They sat a long time at table, and though the tinman seemed to talk all the time he was eating, the quantity of victuals that he caused to disappear surprised even Mrs Warner, accustomed as she was to the appetite of Israel. When the Yankee had at last completed his supper, the farmer invited him to stay all night; but he replied, "It was moonshiny, and fine cool travelling after a warm day; he preferred putting on towards Maryland as soon as his creature was rested, and had a feed."

He then, without more ceremony, led his horse and cart into the barn-yard, and stopping near the stable door, fed the animal by the light of the moon, and carried him a bucket of water from the pump.

The girls being reminded by their mother that it was late, and that the cows had long since come home, they took their pails and went out to milk, while she washed up the supper things. Whilst they were milking, the subsequent dialogue took place between them:—

Orphy. I know it's not right to notice strangers, and to be sure the man's welcome, but, Amy, did thee ever see anybody take victuals like this Yankee?

Amy. Yes, but he didn't eat all he took, for I saw him slip a great chunk of bread and cheese into his pocket, and then a big piece of pie, while he was talking and making us laugh.

Orphy. Well, I think a man must be very badly off to do such a thing. I wonder he did not ask for victuals to take away with him. He need not have been afraid. He must know that victuals is no object. And then he has travelled the roads long enough to be sure that he can get a meal for nothing at any house he stops at, as all the tinmen do. He must have seen us looking at his eating so much, and may be his pride is hurt, and so he's made up his mind, all of a sudden, to take his meals no more at people's houses.

Amy. Then why can't he stop at a tavern, and pay for his victuals?

Orphy. May be he don't want to spend his money in that trifling way. Who knows, he may be saving it up to help an old mother, or to buy back land, or something of that sort? I'll be bound he calculates upon eating nothing to-morrow but what he slipped off from our table.

Amy. All he took will not last him a day. It's a pity of him, anyhow.

Orphy. I wish he had not been too bashful to ask for victuals to take with him.

Amy. And still he did not strike me at all as a bashful man.

Orphy. Suppose we were just in a private way to put some victuals into his cart for him, without letting him know anything about it! Let's hide it among the tins, and how glad he'll be when he finds it to-morrow!

Amy. So we will; that's an excellent notion! I never pitied anybody so much since the day the beggars came, which was five years ago last harvest; for I have kept count ever since; and I remember it as well as if it was yesterday.

Orphy. We don't know what a hard thing it is to want victuals, as the Irish schoolmaster used to tell us when he saw us emptying pans of milk into the pig-trough, and turning the cows into the orchard to eat the heaps of apples lying under the trees.

Amy. Yes, and it must be worse for an American to want victuals than for people from the old countries, who are used to it.

After they had finished their milking, and strained and put away their milk, the kind-hearted little girls proceeded to accomplish their benevolent purpose. They took from the large wire safe in the cellar a pie, half a loaf of bread, and a great piece of cheese, and putting them into a basket, they went to the barn-yard, intending to tell their mother as soon as the tinman was gone, and not for one moment doubting her approval—since in the house of an American farmer, victuals, as Orphy justly observed, are no object.

As they approached the barn-yard they saw, by the light of the moon, the Yankee coming away from his cart, and returning to the house. The girls crouched down behind the garden fence till he had passed, and then cautiously proceeded on their errand. They went to the back of the cart, intending to deposit their provisions, when they were startled at seeing something evidently alive moving behind the round opening of the linen cover; and in a moment the head of a little black child peeped out of the hole.

The girls were so surprised that they stopped short and could not utter a word, and the young negro, evidently afraid of being seen, immediately popped down its head among the tins.

"Amy, did thee see that?" asked Orphy in a low voice.

"Yes, I did so," replied Amy; "what can the Yankee be doing with that little nigger? and why does he hide it? Let's go and ask the child."

"No, no!" exclaimed Orphy, "the tinman will be angry."

"And who cares if he is?" said Amy; "he has done something he is ashamed of, and we need not be afraid of him."

They went quite close to the back of the cart, and Amy said, "Here, little snow-ball, show thyself and speak, and do not be afraid, for nobody's going to hurt thee."

"How did thee come into this cart?" asked Orphy, "and why does the Yankee hide thee? Tell us all about it, and be sure not to speak above thy breath."

The black child again peeped out of the hole, and looking cautiously round, said, "Are you quite sure the naughty man won't hear us?"

"Quite sure," answered Amy; "but is thee boy or girl?"

"I'm a little gal," replied the child; and with the characteristic volubility of her race she continued, "and my name's Dinah, and I'm five years old, and my daddy and mammy are free coloured people, and they lives a big piece off, and daddy works out, and mammy sells gingerbread and molasses-beer, and we have a sign over the door with a bottle and cake on it."

Amy. But how did this man get hold of thee, if thy father and mother are free people? Thee can't be bound to him, or he need not hide thee.

Dinah. Oh, I know, I ain't bounded to him; I expect he stole me.

Amy. Stole thee! What, here in the free state of Pennsylvania?

Dinah. I was out picking huckle-berries in the woods up the roads, and I strayed off a big piece from home. Then the tinman comed along, driving his cart, and I run close to the side of the road to look, as I always does when anybody goes by. So he told me to come into his cart, and he would give me a tin mug to put my huckle-berries in, and I might chuse it myself, and it would hold them a heap better than my old Indian basket. So I was very glad, and he lifted me up into the cart; and I choosed the very best and biggest tin mug he had, and emptied my huckle-berries into it. And then he told me he'd give me a ride in his cart, and then he set me far back on a box, and he whipped his creatur, and druv, and druv, and jolted me so, I tumbled all down among the tins. And then he picked me up, and tied me fast with his handkercher to one of the back posts of the cart, to keep me steady, he said. And then, for all I was steady, I couldn't help crying, and I wanted him to take me home to daddy and mammy. But he only sniggered at me, and said he wouldn't, and bid me hush; and then he got mad, and because I couldn't hush up just in a minute, he whipped me quite smart.

Orphy. Poor little thing!

Dinah. And then I got frightened, for he put on a wicked look, and said he'd kill me dead if I cried any more, or made the least noise. And so he has been carrying me along in his cart for two days and two nights, and he makes me hide away all the time, and he won't let nobody see me. And I hate him, and yesterday, when I know'd he didn't see me, I spit on the crown of his hat.

Amy. Hush! Thee must never say thee hates anybody.

Dinah. At night I sleeps upon the bag of feathers; and when he stops anywhere to eat, he comes sneaking to the back of the cart, and pokes in victuals (he has just now brung me some), and he tells me he wants me to be fat and good-looking. I was afeard he was going to sell me to the butcher, as Nac Willet did his fat calf, and I thought I'd axe him about it, and he laughed and told me he was going to sell me, sure enough, but not to a

butcher. And I'm almost all the time very sorry, only sometimes I'm not; and then I should like to play with the tins, only he won't let me. I don't dare to cry out loud, for fear the naughty man would whip me, but I always moan when we're going through woods, and there's nobody in sight to hear me. He never lets me look out of the back of the cart, only when there's nobody to see me, and he won't let me sing even when I want to. And I moan most when I think of daddy and mammy, and how they are wondering what has become of me; and I think moaning does me good, only he stops me short.

Amy. Now, Orphy, what is to be done? The tinman has, of course, kidnapped this black child to take her into Maryland, where he can sell her for a good price, as she is a fat, healthy-looking thing, and that is a slave state. Does thee think we ought to let him take her off.

Orphy. No, indeed! I think I could feel free to fight for her myself; that is, if fighting was not forbidden by Friends. Yonder's Israel coming to turn the cows into the clover-field. Little girl, lie quiet, and don't offer to show thyself.

Israel now advanced—"Well, girls," said he, "what's thee doing at the tinman's cart? Not meddling among his tins, I hope? Oh, the curiosity of women folks!"

"Israel," said Amy, "step softly; we have something to show thee."

The girls then lifted up the corner of the cart-cover, and displayed the little negro girl, crouched upon the bag of feathers—a part of his merchandise which the Yankee had not thought it expedient to produce, after hearing Mrs Warner's anecdote of one of his predecessors. The young man was much amazed; and his two sisters began both at once to relate to him the story of the black child. Israel looked almost indignant. His sisters said to him, "To be sure we won't let the Yankee carry this child off with, him."

"I judge we won't," answered Israel.

"Then," said Amy, "let us take her out of the cart, and hide her in the barn, or somewhere, till he is gone."

"No," replied Israel, "I can't say I feel free to do that. It would be too much like stealing her over again; and I've no notion of evening myself to a Yankee in any of his ways. Put her down in the cart, and let her alone. I'll have no underhand work about

her. Let's all go back to the house. Mother has got down all the broken crockery from the top shelf in the corner cupboard, and the Yankee's mending it with a sort of stuff like sticks of sealing-wax, that he carries about with him; and I dare say he'll get her to pay him more for it than the things are worth. But I say nothing."

The girls cautioned Dinah not to let the tinman know that they had discovered her, and to keep herself perfectly quiet; and they then accompanied their brother to the house, feeling very fidgety and uneasy.

They found the table covered with old bowls, old tea-pots, old sugar dishes, and old pitchers, the fractures of which the Yankee was cementing together, whilst Mrs Warner held the candle, and her husband viewed the operation with great curiosity.

"Israel," said his mother, as he entered, "this friend is making the china as good as new, only that we can't help seeing the join; and we are going to give all the mended things to thee."

The Yankee having finished his work, and been paid for it, said it was high time for him to be about starting, and he must go and look after his cart. He accordingly left the house for that purpose; and Israel, looking out at the end window, said, "I see he's not coming round to the house again, but going to try the short-cut into the back road. I'll go and see that he puts up the bars after him."

Israel went out, and his sisters followed him, to see the tinman off.

The Yankee came to the bars, leading his horse with the cart, and found Israel there before him. "Are you going to let down the bars for me?" said the tinman.

"No," replied Israel, "I'm not going to be so polite; but I intend to see that thee carries off nothing more than belongs to thee."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the Yankee, changing colour.

"I expect I can show thee," answered Israel. Then, stepping up to the back of the cart, and putting in his hands, he pulled out the black child, and held her up before him, saying, "Now, if thee offers to touch this girl, I think we shall be apt to differ."

The tinman then advanced towards Israel, and, with a menacing look, raised his whip; but the fearless young Quaker (having consigned the little girl to his sisters, who held her between them) immediately broke a stick from a tree that grew near, and stood on the defensive, with a most steadfast look of calm resolution.

The Yankee went close up to him, brandishing his whip, but, before he had time to strike, Israel, with the utmost coolness, and with great strength and dexterity, seized him by the collar, and swinging him round to some distance, flung him to the ground with such force as to stun him, saying, "Mind I don't call myself a fighting character, but if thee offers to get up I shall feel free to keep thee down."

The tinman began to move, and the girls ran shrieking to the house for their father, dragging with them the little black girl, whose screams (as is usual with all of her colour) were the loudest of the loud.

In an instant the stout old farmer was at the side of his son, and notwithstanding the struggle of the Yankee, they succeeded by main force in conveying him to the stable, into which they fastened him for the night.

Early next morning, Israel and his father went to the nearest magistrate for a warrant and a constable, and were followed home by half the township. The county court was then in session; the tinman was tried, and convicted of having kidnapped a free black child, with the design of selling her as a slave in one of the Southern States; and he was punished by fine and imprisonment.

The Warner family would have felt more compassion for him than they did, only that all the mended china fell to pieces again the next day, and his tins were so badly soldered that all their bottoms came out before the end of the month.

Mrs Warner declared that she had done with Yankee tinmen for ever, and in short with all other Yankees. But the storekeeper, Philip Thompson, who was the sensible man of the neighbourhood, and took two Philadelphia newspapers, convinced her that some of the best and greatest men America can boast of, were natives of the New England States; and he even asserted, that in the course of his life (and his age did not exceed sixty-seven) he had met with no less than five perfectly honest Yankee tinmen; and besides being honest, two of them were not in the least impudent. Amongst the latter, however, he

did not of course include a very handsome fellow, that a few years since made the tour of the United States with his tin-cart, calling himself the Boston Beauty, and wearing his own miniature round his neck.

To conclude:—An advertisement having been inserted in several of the papers to designate where Dinah, the little black girl, was to be found, and the tinman's trial having also been noticed in the public prints, in about a fortnight her father and mother (two very decent free negroes) arrived to claim her, having walked all the way from their cottage at the extremity of the next county. They immediately identified her, and the meeting was most joyful to them and to her. They told at full length every particular of their anxious search after their child, which was ended by a gentleman bringing a newspaper to their house, containing the welcome intelligence that she was safe at Micajah Warner's.

Amy and Orphy were desirous of retaining little Dinah in the family, and as the child's parents seemed very willing, the girls urged their mother to keep her instead of Chloe, who, they said, could very easily be made over to Israel. But to the astonishment of the whole family, Israel on this occasion proved refractory, declaring that he would not allow his wife to be plagued with such an imp as Chloe, and that he chose to have little Dinah herself, if her parents would bind her to him till she was eighteen.

This affair was soon satisfactorily arranged.

Israel was married at the appointed time, and took possession of the house near the saw-mill. He prospered; and in a few years was able to buy a farm of his own, and to build a stone-house on it. Dinah turned out extremely well, and the Warner family still talk of the night when she was discovered in the cart of the travelling tinman.

Story 3—Chapter 1.

The Beautiful Gate.

One morning, by break of day, old Josiah, who lived in the little cottage he had built, on the borders of the Great Forest, found his wife awake long before him—indeed she had scarcely closed her eyes that night; and she was ready to speak the moment

his eyes opened; for she had promised their dear Tiny, their only child, that she would have a private talk with his father. So she said in a low, but distinct voice, as though she were talking to herself:

"I have nursed him, and watched over him year after year. He has been like the sun shining in my path, and precious as a flower. There is not another like him. I love him better than I do my eyes. If he were away I might as well be blind."

"That puts me in mind of what I've been dreaming," said the old man. "If I was only sure that he would come at last to the Beautiful Gate, I wouldn't say another word. But who can tell? And it actually happened that he lost his sight—poor Tiny!"

Josiah did not finish what he had begun to say, but hid his face in the bed-clothes, and then the good wife knew that he was weeping, and her own tears began to fall, and she could not say a word.

After breakfast, when Josiah had gone off into the woods, the mother told Tiny of this bit of a conversation, but of course she could not explain about the dream. She knew no more what the boy's father had dreamed than you or I do, only she knew it was something curious and fanciful about the Beautiful Gate.

Tiny listened with great interest to his mother's words, and he smiled as he kissed her when she had done speaking; and he said, "Wait till this evening, mother dear, and you shall see."

And so she waited till the evening.

When they were gathered around the kitchen-fire at night, Tiny took down the harp that hung on the kitchen wall.

It had hung there ever since the day that Tiny was born. A poor old pilgrim gave it on that very day to Josiah in exchange for a loaf of bread. By that I do not mean that Josiah sold the loaf to the poor old hungry pilgrim. Josiah was too charitable to make a trade with a beggar. But the stranger said this strange thing to Josiah:—"I am near to death—I shall sing no more—I am going home. Keep my harp for me until a singer asks you for it, and promises you that he will sing unto the Lord a New Song. Give it to *him*; but be sure before you do so that he is worthy to sing the song unto the Lord."

So Josiah had taken the harp home with him, and hung it on the wall, as I said, on the day that Tiny was born. And he

waited for the coming of the poet who should have that wondrous song to sing.

The father, when he saw what it was the boy would do, made a little move as if he would prevent him; but the mother playfully caught the old man's hand, and held it in hers, while she said aloud, "Only one song, Tiny. Your father's rest was disturbed last night—so get through with it as quickly as you can."

At these last words the old man looked well pleased, for he fancied that his wife agreed with him, because he would not yet allow himself to believe that it was for his boy Tiny that the old pilgrim left the harp.

And yet never was a sweeter voice than that of the young singer—old Josiah acknowledged that to himself, and old Josiah knew—he was a judge of such things, for all his life he had been singing songs in his heart.

Yes! though you would never have imagined such a thing, that is, if you are in the habit of judging folks from their outward appearance—he had such a rough, wrinkled face, brown with freckles and tan, such coarse, shaggy grey hair, and such a short, crooked, awkward figure, you never would have guessed what songs he was for ever singing in his heart with his inward voice—they were songs which worldly people would never hear—only God and the angels heard them. Only God and the holy angels!—for as to Kitty, though she was Josiah's best earthly friend, though she knew he was such an excellent man, though she believed that there was not a better man than he in all the world, though year by year he had been growing lovelier and lovelier in her eyes—yes! though his hair, of course, became rougher and greyer, and his figure more bent, and his hands harder, and his teeth were nearly all gone!—growing lovelier because of his excellence, which increased with age as good wine does—still even she, who knew him better than any person on earth, even she knew him so little that she never so much as dreamed that this wonderful voice of Tiny's was but the echo of what had been going on in Josiah's heart and mind ever since he was himself a child!

It was because he understood all this so very well that Josiah was troubled when he thought about his son.

But to go back to the singer in the chimney-corner. Tiny sat alone on his side of the fire-place, in the little chair fashioned out of knotted twigs of oak which his father had made for him long ago. Opposite him were the old folks—the father with his

arms folded on his broad chest, the mother knitting beside him, now and then casting a sidelong glance at the old man to see how it went with him.

Wonderful was that song which Tiny sung!

Even the winter wind seemed hushing its voice to hear it, and through the little windows looked the astonished moon.

Josiah lifted up his eyes in great amazement as he heard it, as if he had altogether lost himself. It was nothing like his dream that Tiny sang, though to be sure it was all about a Beautiful Gate.

Altogether about the Beautiful Gate! and of the young poet, who, passing through it, went his way into the great Temple of the World, singing his great songs, borne like a conqueror with a golden canopy carried over him, and a golden crown upon his head! Riding upon a white horse splendidly caparisoned, and crowds of people strewing multitudes of flowers before him! And of the lady who placed the victor's crown upon his head! She was by his side, more beautiful than any dream, rejoicing in his triumph, and leading him on towards her father's palace, the Beautiful Pearl Gates of which were thrown wide open, and the king himself with a bare head stood there on foot, to welcome the poet to the great feast.

With this the song ended, and with a grand sweep of the silver strings Tiny gently arose, and hung the harp against the wall, and sat down again with folded hands and blushing cheek, half frightened, now when all was over, to think what he had done. The fire had vanished from his eyes, and the red glow of his cheek went following after; and if you had gone into Josiah's kitchen just then, you never would have guessed that *he* was the enchanter who had been raising such a storm of splendid music.

At first the old man could not speak—tears choked his words. "Ahem," said he once or twice, and he cleared his voice with the intention of speaking; but for a long time no words followed. At length he said, shaking his head,—“It isn't like what I dreamed—it isn't like what I dreamed;” and one would have supposed that the old man felt himself guilty of a sin by the way he looked at Tiny, it was with so very sad a look.

“But beautifuller,” said the mother, “beautifuller, isn't it, Josiah!”

"Yes," answered Josiah; but still he spoke as if he had some secret misgiving—as if he were not quite sure that the beauty of the song had a right to do away with the sadness of his dream.

"But," said Tiny, timidly, yet as if determined that he would have the matter quite settled now and for ever—"am I a singer, father? am I a poet?"

Slowly came the answer—but it actually came, "Yes," with a broken voice and troubled look, and then the old man buried his face in his hands, as if he had pronounced some dreadful doom upon his only son.

"Then," said Tiny boldly, rising from his seat, "I must go into the world. It says it needs me; and father, shall *your* son hide himself when any one in need calls to him for help? I never would have gone, father, if you and mother had not said that I was a singer and a poet. For you I know would never deceive me; and I made a vow that if ever a time came when you should say that to me, then I would go. But this is my home, father and mother; I shall never get another. The wide world could not give me one. It is not rich enough to build me a home like this."

"Don't speak in that way," said the old man; and he turned away that Tiny should not see his face, and he bent his head upon the back of his chair.

Presently Tiny went softly up to him and laid his hand upon Josiah's arm, and his voice trembled while he said, "Dear father, are you angry with me?"

"No, Tiny," said Josiah; "but what are you going to do with the world? You! ... my poor boy."

"Good!" said Tiny with a loud, courageous voice—as if he were prepared, single handed, to fight all the evil there was in the world—"Good, father, or I would not have dared to take the pilgrim's harp down from the wall. I will sing," continued he still more hopefully, and looking up smiling into the old man's face—"I will sing for the sick and the weary, and cheer them; I will tell the people that God smiles on patient labour, and has a reward in store for the faithful, better than gold and rubies. I will get money for my songs, and feed the hungry; I will comfort the afflicted; I will—"

"But," said Josiah solemnly, lifting his head from the back of the chair, and looking at Tiny as if he would read every thought

there was in the boy's heart, "What did all that mean about the Beautiful Gate? Ah, my son, you were thinking more of your own pride and glory, than of the miserable and the poor!"

"It was only to prove to you that I had a voice, and that I could sing, father," answered Tiny.

Long gazed Josiah upon the face of his son as he heard this. Then he closed his eyes, and bent his head, and Tiny knew that he was praying. That was a solemn silence—you could have heard a pin drop on the kitchen floor.

Presently the old man arose, and without speaking, went softly and took the harp down from the wall. "Take it," said he, handing it to Tiny, "Take it—it is yours. Do what you will. The Lord direct your goings."

"Without your blessing, father?" said Tiny, stepping back and folding his arms upon his breast. He would not take the harp. Then, with both hands pressed on Tiny's head, the old man said, "May God bless you, my son."

The old man's face was very calm then, and there was not a tear in his eyes as he spoke; he had begun to hope again. And he turned away from Tiny to comfort his poor wife.

"Many, many years we lived alone before our Tiny came," said he, "and we were very happy; and we will be very happy yet, though he is going away. He is our all; but if the world needs him he shall go and serve it." Nothing more said Josiah, for his heart was full—too full for further speech.

Well, Tiny the singer went sailing down the river one bright morning, on a boat loaded with wood, which in that part of the country is called lumber; his harp was on his arm, and the rest of his worldly goods upon his back.

Tiny sat upon the top of the lumber, the most valuable part of the ship's load by far, though the seamen and the owner of the lumber thought him only a silly country lad, who was going down to the city, probably on a foolish errand. And Tiny looked at the banks of the river, right and left, as they floated down it, and thought of all the songs he would sing.

All the first day it was of the poor he would help, of the desolate hearts he would cheer, of the weary lives he would encourage, that he thought; the world that had need of him should never find him hard of hearing when it called to him for help. And

much he wondered—the poet Tiny sailing down the river towards the world, how it happened that the world with all its mighty riches, and its hosts on hosts of helpers, should ever stand in need of him! But though he wondered, his joy was none the less that it had happened so. On the first night he dreamed of pale faces growing rosy, and sad hearts becoming lighter, and weary hands strengthened, all by his own efforts. The world that had need of him felt itself better off on account of his labours!

But on the second day of Tiny's journey other thoughts began to mingle with these. About his father and mother he thought, not in such a way as they would have been glad to know, but proudly and loftily! What could he do for them? Bring home a name that the world never mentioned except with praises and a blessing! And that thought made his cheek glow and his eyes flash, and at night he dreamed of a trumpeter shouting his name abroad, and going up the river to tell old Josiah how famous his boy had become in the earth!

And the third day he dreamed, with his eyes wide open, the livelong day, of the Beautiful Gate, and the palace of Fame and Wealth to which it led! and he saw himself entering therein, and the multitude following him. He ate upon a throne, and wise men came with gifts, and offered them to him. Alas, poor Tiny! the world had already too many helpers thinking just such thoughts—it had need of no more coming with such offerings as these. Would no one tell him so? Would no one tell him that the new song to be sung unto our Lord was very different from this?

At the end of the third day, Tiny's journey was ended... And he was landed in the world... Slowly the ship came sailing into harbour, and took its place among a thousand other ships, and Tiny went ashore.

It was about sunset that Tiny found himself in the street of the great city. The workmen were going home from their labour, he thought at first; but could it be a city full of workmen? he asked himself as the crowd passed by him and he stood gazing on the poor. For he saw only the poor: now and then something dazzling and splendid went past, but if he turned again to discover what it was that made his eyes ache so with the brightness, the strange sight was lost in the crowd, and all he could see were pale faces, and hungry voices, and the half-clad forms of men, and women, and children. And then he said to himself with a groan, "The city is full of beggars."

As he said that, another thought occurred to Tiny, and he unfastened his harp, and touched the strings. But in the din and roar of the city wagons, and in the confusion of voices, for every one seemed to be talking at the top of his voice, what chance had that harp-player of being heard? Still, though the crowd brushed past him as if there was no sound whatever in the harp strings, and no power at all in the hand that struck them, Tiny kept on playing, and presently he began to sing.

It was *that* they wanted—the living human voice, that trembled and grew strong again, that was sorrowful and joyous, that prayed and wept, and gave thanks, just as the human heart does! It was *that* the people wanted; and so well did they know their want that the moment Tiny began to sing, the crowd going past him, heard his voice. And the people gathered round him, and more than one said to himself with joy, “Our brother has come at last!”

They gathered around him—the poor, and lame, and sick, and blind; ragged children, weary men, desponding women, whose want and sorrow spoke from every look, and word, and dress. Closely they crowded around him; and angry voices were hushed, and troubled hearts for the moment forgot their trouble, and the weary forgot that another day of toil was before them. The pale woman nearest Tiny who held the little baby in her arms, felt its limbs growing colder and colder, and once she looked under her shawl and quickly laid her hand upon her darling’s heart, but though she knew then that the child was dead, still she stood there smiling, and looking up towards heaven where Tiny’s eyes so often looked, because at that very moment he was singing of the Father in Heaven, whose house of many mansions is large enough for all the world.

It was strange to see the effect of Tiny’s song upon those people! How bright their faces grew! kind words from a human heart are such an excellent medicine—they make such astonishing cures! You would have thought, had you been passing by the crowd that gathered around Tiny, you would have thought an angel had been promising some good thing to them. Whereas it was only this young Tiny, this country lad, who had journeyed from the shadow of the Great Forest, who was telling them of a good time surely coming!

When he had finished his song, Tiny would have put up his harp, and gone his way, but that he could not do, because of the crowd.

"Sing again!" the people cried,—the beggars and rich men together (it was a long time since they had spoken with one voice). Did I tell you that a number of rich men had gathered, like a sort of outer wall, around the crowd of poor people which stood next to Tiny?

"Sing again," they cried; and loud and clear above the other voices said one, "There is but a solitary singer in the world that sings in such a strain as that. And he, I thought, was far away. Can this be he?"

Then Tiny's heart leaped within him, hearing it, and he said to himself: "If my father and mother were but here to see it!" And he sang again—and still for the poor, and the weary, and the sick, and the faint-hearted, until the street became as silent as a church where the minister is saying, "Glory be unto the Father." And indeed it was just then a sacred temple, where a sacred voice was preaching in a most sacred cause.

I'm sure you know by this time what the "cause" was? And while he sang, the rich men of the outer circle were busy among themselves, even while they listened, and presently the person who had before spoken, made his way through the crowd, carrying a great purse filled with silver, and he said, "You are the poet himself—do with this what you think best. We have a long time been looking for you in the world. Come home with me, and dwell in my house, oh, Poet, I pray you."

Tiny took the heavy purse, and looked at it, and from it to the people.

Then said he—oh, what melody was in his voice, how sweet his words!—"None of you but are my friends—you are more—my brothers and sisters. Come and tell me how much you need." As he spoke, he looked at the woman who stood nearest him, with the dead baby in her arms. Her eyes met his, and she threw back the old, ragged shawl, and showed him her little child. "Give me," said she, "only enough to bury it. I want nothing for myself. I had nothing but my baby to care for."

The poet bowed his head over the little one, and fast his tears fell on the poor, pale face, and like pearls the tears shone on the soft, white cheek, while he whispered in the ear of the woman, "Their angels do always behold the face of Our Father." And he gave her what she needed, and gently covered the baby's face again with the tattered shawl, and the mother went away.

Then a child came up and said—now this was a poor street beggar, remember, a boy whom people called *as bold as a thief*—he came and looked at Tiny, and said gently, as if speaking to an elder brother whom he loved and trusted: “My father and mother are dead; I have a little brother and sister at home, and they depend on me; I have been trying to get work, but no one believes my story. I would like to take a loaf of bread home to them.”

And Tiny, looking at the boy, seemed to read his heart, and he said, laying his hand on the poor fellow’s shoulder, “Be always as patient, and gentle, and believing as you are now, and you will have bread for them and to spare, without fear.”

Then came an old, old man bending on his staff, and he spoke out sharply, as if he were half starved, and all he said was, “Bread!” and with that he held out his hand as if all he had to do was to ask, in order to get what he wanted.

For a moment Tiny made him no answer, and some persons who had heard the demand, and saw that Tiny gave him nothing, began to laugh. But at that sound Tiny rebuked them with his look, and put his hand into the purse.

The old man saw all this, and he said, “I am tired of begging, I am tired of saying, ‘for mercy’s sake give to me,’—for people don’t have mercy—they know nothing about being merciful, and they don’t care for mercy’s sake. I don’t beg of you, Mr Poet. I only ask you as if you were my son, and that’s all. Give me bread. I’m starving.”

And Tiny said, “For my dear father’s sake take this—God forbid that *I* should ever be deaf when an old man with a wrinkled face and white hair speaks to me.”

Afar off stood a young girl looking at the poet. Tiny saw her, and that she needed something of him, though she did not come and ask, and so he beckoned to her. She came at that, and as she drew nearer he fancied that she had been weeping, and that her grief had kept her back. She had wept so violently that when Tiny spoke to her and said, “What is it?” she could not answer him. But at length, while he waited so patiently, she made a great effort, and controlled herself and said, “My mother!”

That was all she said—and Tiny asked no more. He knew that some great grief had fallen on her—that was all he needed to know; he laid his hand in hers, and turned away before she

could thank him, but he left with her a word that he had spoken which had power to comfort her long after the money he gave her was all gone—long after the day when her poor mother had no more need for bread. “When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will lift me up.” That was what he whispered to her as he left her.

And thus he went through that crowd of miserable people, comforting them all. But it was remarkable how much more value the poor folks seemed to put upon his word than they did upon the money he gave them, much as they stood in need of that! I wonder if you ever thought about the wonderful power there is in words?

At length, when the purse was empty, he stood alone in the midst of the circle of rich men who had given him the silver to distribute as he would. Then the man who handed him the purse went up and said to Tiny, “Poet, come home with me. You are come at last! the city ought to be illuminated—we have stood so long in need of you, expecting you.”

So Tiny, believing what the rich man said, went home with the stranger—and for a long time he abode in that house.

And rich men feasted Tiny, and taught him to drink wine: and great men praised him, and flattered him till he believed that their praise was precious above all things, and that he could not live without it! Was not that absurd? Nay, children, was not that most terrible, that our dear Tiny should ever have been tempted to believe such wicked trash and falsehood! He, too, who was to sing that sweet and holy New Song to the Lord!

They surrounded him day and night, these rich, gay men, and these great men, and they fed upon the delicious thoughts he gave them, and they kept him in such a whirl of pleasure that he had no time to work for the poor, and hardly any time to think of them—excepting at the dead of night, when he sometimes fancied or dreamed that the old pilgrim owner of the harp had come, or would come quickly, and take it away from him. At these times poor Tiny would make excellent resolutions, but the next day was sure to see them broken. He seemed no stronger when he attempted to keep them than a poor little bird who is determined that he will be free, and so goes driving against the wires of his cage!

When Tiny spoke with his friend, as he sometimes did, about the plan with which he had come into the world, his friend always made him very polite answers, and good promises—oh,

yes, certainly he would do all that *he* could to help him on in such an excellent cause! But the fact was, he did everything to prevent him. I wonder if anybody else has got any such friend in his heart, or in his house, as our Tiny found in his very first walk through that city street? If I knew of any one that had, I should say, look out for him! Beware of him.

And so Tiny lived, and presently it happened just as you would expect; his conscience troubled him no longer; he only sang such songs on feast days, and holidays, and even in the church, as his companions liked; and he became very well pleased with his employment! That was the very worst of it.

I shall tell you in a very few words what happened next. Tiny suddenly fell ill of a very curious disease, which caused all his rich friends to forsake him, and he almost died of it.

In those days his only helper was a poor young beggar girl—one of those persons whom he had relieved by his songs, and by the money he distributed from the rich man's purse that happy day,—the little girl who had wept so bitterly, and whose only word was, when he questioned her,—“My mother!”

He recovered from his disease in time, but all his old acquaintances had forsaken him; and he must have felt their loss exceedingly, for now he had an attack of a desperate complaint, which I pray you may never have!—called Despair—and Tiny crept away from the sight of all men, into a garret, and thought that he would die there.

A garret at Home is a very different place from a garret in the World; and so our poet thought, when he compared this miserable, dismal place with the little attic far, far away in his own father's cottage, where he was next-door neighbour to the swallows who slept in their little mud cabins under the cottage eaves!

Never in his life was Tiny so lonely. He had come to help the World, said he, talking to himself, and the World cared not half so much about it as it would about the doings of a wonderful “learned pig,” or the extraordinary spectacle of a man cutting profiles with his toes in black paper!

“Have you been all the while helping the World, and is this all the pay you get?” said the girl, his poor friend, who remembered what he had done for her, when she was in her worst need.

"Yes," said Tiny; but there was no truth in what he said. He did not intend to speak falsely, however,—which proves the sad pass he had arrived at; he did not even know when he was deceiving himself! And when Tiny said, that "yes," what do you suppose he thought of? Not of all the precious time that he had wasted—not of the Pilgrim's Harp—not of the promises he had made his father—nor of the great hope of the poor which he had no cruelly disappointed—but only of the evil fortune which had fallen on himself! This beggar girl to wait on him, instead of the most beautiful lady in the world for a crown bearer! This garret for a home, instead of a place at the king's table. And more fiercely than ever raged that sickness called Despair.

But at length his strength began to return to him a little, and then for the first time poor Tiny discovered that he was blind. And all the days and weeks that came and went were like one long, dark night. In those dreadful days our singer had nothing to do but to think, and the little beggar girl had nothing to do but to beg; for Tiny's charity and goodness of heart seemed to have all forsaken him, and one day in his anger he drove her out of his garret, and bade her return no more, for that the very thought of her was hateful to him. In doing this, Tiny brought a terrible calamity upon himself; he fell against his harp and broke it.

After that, while he sat pondering on the sad plight he was in, hungry and cold and blind, he suddenly started up. A new thought had come to him. "I will go home to my father's house," he said. "There is no other way for me. Oh, my mother!" and bitterly he wept as he pronounced that name, and thought how little like her tender and serene love was the love of the best of all the friends he had found in that great city of the world.

As he started up so quickly in a sort of frenzy, his foot struck against the broken harp, and instantly the instrument gave forth a wailing sound, that pierced the poet's heart. He lifted up the harp: alas! it was so broken he could do nothing with it; from his hands it fell back upon the floor where it had lain neglected, forgotten, so long. But Tiny's heart was now fairly awakened, and stooping to the floor, he raised the precious treasure again. "I will carry back the broken fragments," said he; "they shall go back to my father with me. The harp is his; I can do nothing more with it for ever. I have ruined it; I have done nothing for the world, as I promised him. A fine thing it is for me to go back to him in this dreadful plight. But if he says to me, 'Thou art no son of mine,' I will say, 'Father, I am no more

worthy to be called thy son; make me thy hired servant—only pay me in love.”

And so saying, Tiny began to descend from his attic. Carefully he went down the stairs, ready to ask help of the first person whose voice he should hear. But he had groped his way as far as the street door, before he met a soul. As he stepped upon the threshold, and was about to move on into the street, a voice—a child’s voice—said to him—

“I’m very hungry, sir.”

The patient tone of the speaker arrested Tiny’s steps, and he pondered a moment. It was the hearts that belonged to voices like this, which he had vowed to help! His own heart sunk within him at that thought. “Wretched soul that I am,” said he to himself, thinking of the opportunities which he had lost. But to the child he said—

“I’m blinder than a bat, and hungry, too. So I’m worse off than you are. Do you live about here?”

“Just round the corner,” said the little girl.

“Is there a physician near here?” he asked next; for a now thought—a new hope, rather—had come into his heart.

“Yes, sir—very near. I know where it is,” said the child. “I got him once for my mother.”

“If you will lead me to him,” said Tiny, his voice broken as his heart was, “I will do a good turn for you. You won’t be the loser by it. Who takes care of you?”

“Of me, sir?” asked the girl, as if surprised that he should think that any one took care of her. “Nobody. I’m all alone.”

“Alone! alone!” repeated Tiny: “your hand is very little; you are a mite of a girl to be alone.”

“They’re all dead but me, every one of ’em. Yes, sir, they are.”

“No mother?” said Tiny, with a choking voice—thinking of the kind heart and tender loving eyes away off in the lonely little cottage on the border of the forest—“no mother, little girl? Was *that* what you said?”

“Dead,” replied the child.

"Did you love her?" asked Tiny, the poet, while his heart wept burning tears.

The girl said not a word, but Tiny heard her sob, and held her hand close in his own, as though he would protect her, even if he were blind, while he said aloud—

"Lead me to the physician, little friend."

Quietly and swiftly she led him, and as they went, Tiny never once thought, What if any of the great folks who once courted and praised him should see him led on foot through the streets by a little beggar girl, himself looking hardly more respectable than the poorest of all beggars!

"Shall I ring the door bell?" asked she, at length coming to a sudden halt.

"King it," said he.

But before she could do that the house door opened, and the physician himself appeared, prepared for a drive; his carriage was already in waiting at the door.

"Here he is," exclaimed the girl; and at the same moment a gruff voice demanded—

"What do you want, you two, eh? Speak quick, for I'm off."

In one word Tiny told what it was he wanted.

"Blind, eh?" said the doctor, stooping and looking into the pale face of the unhappy singer; "*born* blind! I can do nothing for you. John! drive the horses away from that curb-stone."

He stepped forward, as he spoke, as if about to leave the children, but he stood still again the next minute, arrested by the sound of Tiny's indignant voice.

"Born blind!" the singer cried; "no more than you were, sir. If you knew how to use your eyes to any good purpose, you never would say such a thing. Since I was ill I've been blind, but never a moment before."

"Come into the house a minute," said the doctor, who had been carefully studying Tiny's face during the last few seconds. "Come in, and I'll soon settle that point for you."

"For yourself, you mean," said Tiny, in an under tone, as he and the beggar girl went in.

"What's that you carry?" said the physician. "Lay down your pack for a moment."

But Tiny would not do that. He had taken up his harp in much the same spirit as if it had been a cross, and he was determined never to lay it down again until he came to his father's house. So he merely said, "Don't call it a pack; it was a harp once, but now it's only some bits of wood and cord."

"Broken!" said the doctor; and you would have been in doubt, if you had heard him, as to whether he meant Tiny's harp or heart. "Broken! ah, ...;" and he seemed to get a little new light on the subject when he looked again into Tiny's face. "Ah," he said again, and still more thoughtfully; "now! about those eyes. You went into a great rage just now when I told you that you were born blind. On a closer examination of them, I am still tempted to think that if you were not born blind, you never had the full use of your eyes. How are you going to prove to me that I'm mistaken? If you can prove that it came after your sickness,"—he hesitated a little—"I'm not so sure but that something might be done for you."

At that Tiny's anger was not much lessened; and he was in doubt as to what he should do, until the child said to him, "Sing to him about your mother." The words had the effect of a broad ray of light streaming into a dark and dismal place, and without another word Tiny began to sing. His voice was faint and broken; it never once rose into a high strain of pride, as if he had his merits as a singer to support; he sung with tears, and such pathos as singer never did before, of his Mother and her Love. By the words of his song he brought her there into that very room, with her good and pleasant looks, her loving eyes and tender smile, so that they who heard could also behold her. He sung of all that she had been to him in his childhood, of the brightness she made in their home, of all that she had done for him, and concluded with the prayerful longing that his eyes might once more receive their sight, that so he might behold her.

"The doctor is weeping," whispered the little girl in Tiny's ear.

It was a long time before the doctor spoke; but at length he arose and laid some pieces of silver in Tiny's hand; and he said, "I cannot help you. But what you have to do is to go to the Beautiful Gate, and there you will find a physician famous for

the cure of such cases as yours. True enough you weren't *born* blind—far from it. I ask your pardon for the mistake. I wish there were more blind in the way you were. Go your way to the Beautiful Gate."

As the doctor spoke he arose and walked quickly towards the door, and the children followed him out. All at once Tiny recollected that they had yet one very important thing to learn, and he cried out—

"But, sir, which way shall we go in order to arrive at the Beautiful Gate?"

Too late! while he spoke the doctor stepped into his carriage, the coachman closed the door with a loud bang and drove away, and Tiny and the little girl were left quite in the dark as to what they should do next. For a long time they stood still in perfect silence. At last Tiny said, "Lead the way, little girl, for I am blind and cannot see. Come! we will go on, if you have an idea that we shall ever come to the BEAUTIFUL GATE."

"In all my life I never heard of it before," said she sadly.

"But I have," cried Tiny, trying to keep his courage up by speaking brave words. "Come on with me!" yet, in spite of his words, he held fast to the girl's hand, and she led him down the street.

Presently, towards nightfall, they came up to a crowd of people, a mob of men and boys who were quarrelling.

Well did Tiny understand the angry sound; and, as for the girl walking with him, she trembled with fear, and said, "Shall we turn down this street? They are having a terrible fight. I am afraid you will be hurt."

"Not I," said Tiny. "Is the sun near setting?"

"It has set," said the girl.

"And does the red light shine on the men's faces?" asked the poet.

"Yes," answered the girl, wondering.

"On the night when I first came into this city's streets it was so. My harp was perfect then; but it was the voice, and not the other music, that the people eared for, when I sang. Wait now."

The little girl obediently stood still, and all at once Tiny began to sing. None of his gay songs sung at feasts, and revels, or on holidays, but a song of peace, as grand and solemn as a psalm; and the quarrelling men and boys stood still and listened, and, before the song was ended, the ringleaders of the fight had crept away in shame. Other voices then began to shout in praise of the young stranger, who with a few simple words had stilled their angry passions. "The brave fellow is blind," said they; "we will do something good for him!" And one, and another, and another, cried out, "Come with us, and we will do you good."

But instead of answering a word, Tiny went his way as if he were deaf as a post, as well as blind as a bat, and by his side, holding his hand close, went the little beggar girl.

Until they came in the increasing darkness to a narrow, crooked lane, and met a woman who was running, crying, with a young child in her arms. "What is this?" asked Tiny.

"A woman, pale as death, with a child in her arms," said the girl.

"Wait!" shouted Tiny, stopping just before the woman. His cry so astonished her that she stood, in an instant, as still as a statue. "What is it that you want?"

"Food! medicine! clothes! a home!" answered she, with a loud cry.

"Give me the child—take this—get what you need, and I will wait here with the little one," said Tiny.

Without a word the woman gave her child—it was a poor little cripple—into his arms; and then she went on to obey him; and softly on the evening air, in that damp, dismal lane, arose the songs which Tiny sang to soothe and comfort the poor little creature. And in his arms it slept, hushed by the melody, a slumber such as had not for a long time visited his eyes.

Wonderful singer! blessed songs! sung for a wretched sickly stranger, who could not even thank him! But you think they died away upon the air, those songs? that they did no other good than merely hushing a hungry child to sleep?

A student in an attic heard the song, and smiled, and murmured to himself, "That is like having a long walk in in the woods, and hearing all the birds sing."

A sick girl, who had writhed upon her bed in pain all the day, heard the gentle singing voice, and it was like a charm upon her—she lay resting in a sweet calm, and said, "Hark! it is an angel!" A blind old man started up from a troubled slumber, and smiled a happy smile that said as plain as any voice, "It gives me back my youth, my children, and my country home;" and he smiled again and again, and listened at his window, scarcely daring to breathe lest he should lose a single word. A baby clad in rags, and sheltered from the cold with them, a baby in its cradle—what do you think that cradle was? as truly as you live, nothing but a box such as a merchant packs his goods in! that baby, sleeping, heard it, and a light like sunshine spread over its pretty face. A thief skulking along in the shadow of the great high building, heard that voice and was struck to the heart, and crept back to his den, and did no wicked thing that night. A prisoner who was condemned to die heard it in his cell near by, and he forgot his chains, and dreamed that he was once more innocent and free—a boy playing with his mates, and loved and trusted by them.

At length the mother of the crippled infant came back, and brought food for her child, and a warm blanket for it, and she, and Tiny, and the beggar girl, Tiny's companion, ate their supper there upon the sidewalk of that dark, narrow lane, and then they went their separate ways—Tiny and his friend, taking the poor woman's blessing with them, going in one direction, and the mother and her baby in another, but they all slept in the street that night.

The next morning by daybreak Tiny was again on his way down that same long, narrow, dingy street, the little girl still walking by his side. Swiftly they walked, and in silence, like persons who are sure of their destination, and know that they are in the right way, though they had not said a word to each other on that subject since they set out in the path.

"What is that?" at length asked Tiny, stopping short in the street.

"A tolling bell," said the girl.

"Do you see a funeral?"

"Yes; don't you?"

Tiny made no answer at first; at length he said, "Let us go into the churchyard;" and he waited for the beggar girl to lead the

way, which she did, and together they went in at the open churchyard gate.

As they did so, a clergyman was thanking the friends who had kindly come to help in burying the mother of orphan children. Tiny heard that word, and he said to the girl, whose name, I ought long ago to have told you, was Grace—he said, “Are there many friends with the children?”

“No,” she answered sadly.

“Are the people poor?” he asked.

“Yes, very poor,” said she.

Then Tiny stepped forward when the clergyman had done speaking, and raised a Hymn for the Dead, and a prayer to the Father of the fatherless.

When he had made an end, he stepped back again, and took the hand of Grace, and walked away with her in the deep silence, for everybody in the churchyard was weeping. But as they went through the gate the silence was broken, and Tiny heard the clergyman saying, “Weep no longer, children; my house shall be your home, my wife shall be your mother. Come, let us go back to our home.”

And Grace and Tiny went their way. On, and on, and on, through the narrow filthy street, out into the open country,—through a desert, and a forest; and it seemed as if poor Tiny would sing his very life away. For wherever those appeared who seemed to need the voice of human pity, or brotherly love, or any act of charity, the voice and Hand of Tiny were upraised. And every hour, whichever way he went, he found THE WORLD HAD NEED OF HIM!

They had no better guide than that with which they set out on their search for the BEAUTIFUL GATE. But Tiny’s heart was opened, and it led him wherever there was misery, and want, and sin, and grief; and flowers grew up in the path he trod, and sparkling springs burst forth in desert places.

And then as to his blindness.

Fast he held by the hand of the beggar girl as they went on their way together, but the film was withdrawing from his eye-balls. When he turned them up towards the heaven, if they could not yet discern that, they could get a glimpse of the

earth! So he said within himself, "Surely we are in the right way; we shall yet come to the Beautiful Gate, and I shall have my sight again. Then will I hasten to my father's house, and when all is forgiven me, I will say to my mother, Receive this child I bring thee for a daughter, for she has been my guide through a weary way; and I know that my mother will love my little sister Grace."

"And what then?" asked a voice in Tiny's soul, "*What* then wilt thou do?"

"Labour till I die!" exclaimed Tiny aloud, with flashing eyes.

"But for what, Poet, wilt thou labour?"

"FOR THE POOR WORLD THAT NEEDS ME," bravely cried he with a mighty voice.

"Ah," whispered something faintly in his ear, with a taunting voice that pierced his heart like a sharp sword—"Ah, you said that once before; and fine work you made of it!"

Tiny made no answer to this taunt, with words, but with all the strength of his great poet mind he cried again, "For the poor world that needs me!" and the vow was registered in Heaven, and angels were sent to strengthen him in that determination—him who was to sing the New Song to the Lord.

A long way further Grace and Tiny walked together on their journey; they walked in silence, thinking so fast that, without knowing it, they were almost on a run in the attempt their feet were making to keep pace with their thoughts. At length Grace broke the silence with a sudden cry—

"Oh, Tiny! what is this?"

Tiny looked up at the sound of her voice, and then he stood stock still as if he were turned to stone.

"Oh, Tiny! can you see?" again exclaimed Grace, who was watching her companion's face in a great wonder; it became so changed all at once. "Oh, Tiny, Tiny, can you see?" she cried again, in terror, for he did not answer her, but grew paler and paler, swaying to and fro like a reed in the wind, until he fell like one dead upon the ground, saying—"My home! my home! and the Beautiful Gate is here!"

Just then an old man came slowly from the forest, near to which they had come in their journey. His head was bent, he moved slowly like one in troubled thought, and as he walked he said to himself, "Long have I toiled, bringing these forest trees into this shape; and people know what I have done—of their own free will they call it a Beautiful Gate. But oh, if I could only find the blind one lying before it, ready to be carried through it to his mother! then, indeed, it would be beautiful to me. Oh Tiny! oh my child, when wilt thou return from thy long wanderings?"

"Please, sir," said a child's voice—it was the voice of our little Grace, you know—"please, sir, will you come and help me?" and she ran back to the place where Tiny lay.

Swiftly as a bird on wing went Josiah with the child. Without a word he lifted up the senseless Poet and the Broken Harp; and with the precious burden passed on through the Beautiful Gate of the Forest, into the Cottage Home—Grace following him!

Once more the Broken Harp hung on the kitchen wall—no longer broken. Once more the swallows and the poet slept side by side, in their comfortable nests. Once more old Kitty's eyes grew bright. Once more Josiah smiled. Again a singing voice went echoing through the world, working miracles of good. Rich men heard it and opened their purses. Proud men heard it and grew humble. Angry voices heard it and grew soft. Wicked spirits heard it and grew beautiful in charities. The sick, and sad, and desolate heard it and were at peace. Mourners heard it and rejoiced. The songs that voice sang, echoed through the churches, through the streets; and by ten thousand thousand firesides they were sung again and yet again. But all the while the great heart, the mighty, loving human heart from which they came, was nestled in that little nest of home on the border of the forest, far away from all the world's temptations, in the safe shelter of a household's love.

Story 4—Chapter 1.

The Chimaera, by N. Hawthorne.

Once in the old, old times (for all the strange things which I tell you about happened long before anybody can remember), a fountain gushed out of a hill-side in the marvellous land of Greece; and, for aught I know, after so many thousand years, it is still gushing out of the very self-same spot. At any rate, there

was the pleasant fountain welling freshly forth and sparkling adown the hillside, in the golden sunset, when a handsome young man named Bellerophon drew near its margin. In his hand he held a bridle, studded with brilliant gems, and adorned with a golden bit. Seeing an old man, and another of middle age, and a little boy, near the fountain, and like wise a maiden, who was dipping up some of the water in a pitcher, he paused, and begged that he might refresh himself with a draught.

"This is very delicious water," he said to the maiden, as he rinsed and filled her pitcher, after drinking out of it. "Will you be kind enough to tell me whether the fountain has any name?"

"Yes; it is called the Fountain of Pirene," answered the maiden; and then she added, "My grandmother has told me that this clear fountain was once a beautiful woman, and when her son was killed by the arrows of the huntress Diana, she melted all away into tears. And so the water, which you find so cool and sweet, is the sorrow of that poor mother's heart!"

"I should not have dreamed," observed the young stranger, "that so clear a well-spring, with its gush and gurgle, and its cheery dance out of the shade into the sunlight, had so much as one tear-drop in its bosom! And this, then, is Pirene? I thank you, pretty maiden, for telling me its name. I have come from a far-away country to find this very spot."

A middle-aged country fellow (he had driven his cow to drink out of the spring) stared hard at young Bellerophon, and at the handsome bridle which he carried in his hand.

"The water-courses must be getting low, friend, in your part of the world," remarked he, "if you come so far only to find the Fountain of Pirene. But, pray, have you lost a horse? I see you carry the bridle in your hand; and a very pretty one it is, with that double row of bright stones upon it. If the horse was as fine as the bridle, you are much to be pitied for losing him."

"I have lost no horse," said Bellerophon, with a smile. "But I happen to be seeking a very famous one, which, as wise people have informed me, must be found hereabouts, if anywhere. Do you know whether the winged horse Pegasus still haunts the Fountain of Pirene, as he used to do, in your forefathers' days?"

But then the country fellow laughed.

Some of you, my little friends, have probably heard that this Pegasus was a snow-white steed, with beautiful silvery wings,

who spent most of his time on the summit of Mount Helicon. He was as wild, and as swift, and as buoyant, in his flight through the air, as any eagle that ever soared into the clouds. There was nothing else like him in the world. He had no mate; he had never been backed or bridled by a master; and, for many a long year, he led a solitary and a happy life.

Oh, how fine a thing it is to be a winged horse! Sleeping at night, as he did, on a lofty mountain-top, and passing the greater part of the day in the air, Pegasus seemed hardly to be a creature of the earth. Whenever he was seen, up very high above people's heads, with the sunshine on his silvery wings, you would have thought that he belonged to the sky, and that, skimming a little too low, he had got astray among our mists and vapours, and was seeking his way back again. It was very pretty to behold him plunge into the fleecy bosom of a bright cloud, and be lost in it for a moment or two, and then break forth from the other side; or, in a sullen rain-storm, when there was a grey pavement of clouds over the whole sky, it would sometimes happen that the winged horse descended right through it, and the glad light of the upper region would gleam after him. In another instant, it is true, both Pegasus and the pleasant light would be gone away together. But any one that was fortunate enough to see this wondrous spectacle felt cheerful the whole day afterwards, and as much longer as the storm lasted.

In the summer time, and in the beautifullest of weather, Pegasus often alighted on the solid earth, and, closing his silvery wings, would gallop over hill and dale for pastime, as fleetly as the wind. Oftener than in any other place, he had been seen near the Fountain of Pirene, drinking the delicious water, or rolling himself upon the soft grass of the margin. Sometimes, too (but Pegasus was very dainty in his food), he would crop a few of the clover-blossoms that happened to be the sweetest.

To the Fountain of Pirene, therefore, people's great-grandfathers had been in the habit of going (as long as they were youthful, and retained their faith in winged horses), in hopes of getting a glimpse at the beautiful Pegasus. But, of late years, he had been very seldom seen. Indeed, there were many of the country folks, dwelling within half an hour's walk of the fountain, who had never beheld Pegasus, and did not believe that there was any such creature in existence. The country fellow to whom Bellerophon was speaking chanced to be one of those incredulous persons.

And that was the reason why he laughed.

"Pegasus, indeed!" cried he, turning up his nose as high as such a flat nose could be turned up, "Pegasus, indeed! A winged horse, truly! Why, friend, are you in your senses? Of what use would wings be to a horse? Could he drag the plough so well, think you? To be sure, there might be a little saving in the expense of shoes; but then, how would a man like to see his horse flying out of the stable window?—yes; or whisking him up above the clouds, when he only wanted to ride to mill! No, no! I don't believe in Pegasus. There never was such a ridiculous kind of a horse-fowl made!"

"I have some reason to think otherwise," said Bellerophon, quietly.

And then he turned to an old, grey man who was leaning on a staff, and listening very attentively, with his head stretched forward, and one hand at his ear, because for the last twenty years he had been getting rather deaf.

"And what say you, venerable sir?" inquired he. "In your younger days, I should imagine you must frequently have seen the winged steed!"

"Ah, young stranger, my memory is very poor!" said the aged man. "When I was a lad, if I remember rightly, I used to believe there was such a horse, and so did everybody else. But, now-a-days, I hardly know what to think, and very seldom think about the winged horse at all. If I ever saw the creature, it was a long, long while ago; and, to tell you the truth, I doubt whether I ever did see him. One day, to be sure, when I was quite a youth, I remember seeing some hoof-tramps round about the brink of the fountain. Pegasus might have made those hoof-marks; and so might some other horse."

"And have you never seen him, my fair maiden?" asked Bellerophon of the girl, who stood with the pitcher on her head, while this talk went on. "You certainly could see Pegasus if anybody can, for your eyes are very bright."

"Once I thought I saw him," replied the maiden, with a smile and a blush. "It was either Pegasus, or a large white bird, a very great way up in the air. And one other time, as I was coming to the fountain with my pitcher, I heard a neigh. Oh, such a brisk and melodious neigh as that was! My very heart leaped with delight at the sound. But it startled me, nevertheless; so that I ran home without filling my pitcher."

"That was truly a pity!" said Bellerophon.

And he turned to the child, whom I mentioned at the beginning of the story, and who was gazing at him, as children are apt to gaze at strangers, with his rosy mouth wide open.

"Well, my little fellow," cried Bellerophon, playfully pulling one of his curls, "I suppose you have often seen the winged horse."

"That I have," answered the child very readily. "I saw him yesterday, and many times before."

"You are a fine little man!" said Bellerophon, drawing the child closer to him. "Come, tell me all about it."

"Why," replied the child, "I often come here to sail little boats in the fountain, and to gather pretty pebbles out of its basin. And sometimes when I look down into the water, I see the image of the winged horse, in the picture of the sky that is there. I wish he would come down and take me on his back, and let me ride him up to the moon! But, if I so much as stir to look at him, he flies far away out of sight."

And Bellerophon put his faith in the child, who had seen the image of Pegasus in the water, and in the maiden, who had heard him neigh so melodiously, rather than in the middle-aged clown, who believed only in cart-horses, or in the old man, who had forgotten the beautiful things of his youth.

Therefore he haunted about the Fountain of Pirene for a great many days afterwards. He kept continually on the watch, looking upward at the sky, or else down into the water, hoping for ever that he should see either the reflected image of the winged horse, or the marvellous reality. He held the bridle, with its bright gems and golden bit, always ready in his hand. The rustic people, who dwelt in the neighbourhood, and drove their cattle to the fountain to drink, would often laugh at poor Bellerophon, and sometimes take him pretty severely to task. They told him that an able-bodied young man, like himself, ought to have better business than to be wasting his time in such an idle pursuit. They offered to sell him a horse, if he wanted one; and when Bellerophon declined the purchase they tried to drive a bargain with him for his fine bridle.

Even the country boys thought him so very foolish, that they used to have a great deal of sport about him; and were rude enough not to care a fig, although Bellerophon saw and heard it. One little urchin, for example, would play Pegasus, and cut

the oddest imaginable capers, by way of flying, while one of his schoolfellows would scamper after him, holding forth a twist of bulrushes, which was intended to represent Bellerophon's ornamented bridle. But the gentle child, who had seen the picture of Pegasus in the water, comforted the young stranger more than all the naughty boys could torment him. The dear little fellow, in his play-hours, often sat down beside him, and, without speaking a word, would look down into the fountain and up towards the sky, with so innocent a faith that Bellerophon could not help feeling encouraged.

Now you will, perhaps, wish to be told why it was that Bellerophon had undertaken to catch the winged horse. And we shall find no better opportunity to speak about this matter than while he is waiting for Pegasus to appear.

If I were to relate the whole of Bellerophon's previous adventures, they might easily grow into a very long story. It will be quite enough to say, that, in a certain country of Asia, a terrible monster, called a Chimaera, had made its appearance, and was doing more mischief than could be talked about between now and sunset. According to the best accounts which I have been able to obtain, this Chimaera was nearly, if not quite, the ugliest and most poisonous creature, and the strangest and unaccountablest, and the hardest to fight with, and the most difficult to run away from, that ever came out of the earth's inside. It had a tail like a boa-constrictor; its body was like I do not care what; and it had three separate heads, one of which was a lion's, the second a goat's, and the third an abominably great snake's. And a hot blast of fire came flaming out of each of its three mouths! Being an earthly monster, I doubt whether it had any wings; but, wings or no, it ran like a goat and a lion, and wriggled along like a serpent, and thus contrived to make about as much speed as all three together.

Oh, the mischief, and mischief, and mischief, that this naughty creature did! With its flaming breath, it could set a forest on fire, or burn up a field of grain, or, for that matter, a village, with all its fences and houses. It laid waste the whole country round about, and used to eat up people and animals alive, and cook them afterwards in the burning oven of its stomach. Mercy on us, little children, I hope neither you nor I will ever happen to meet a Chimaera!

While the hateful beast (if a beast we can anywise call it) was doing all these horrible things, it so chanced that Bellerophon came to that part of the world, on a visit to the king. The king's name was Iobates, and Lycia was the country which he ruled

over. Bellerophon was one of the bravest youths in the world, and desired nothing so much as to do some valiant and beneficent deed, such as would make all mankind admire and love him. In those days, the only way for a young man to distinguish himself was by fighting battles, either with the enemies of his country, or with wicked giants, or with troublesome dragons, or with wild beasts, when he could find nothing more dangerous to encounter. King Iobates, perceiving the courage of his youthful visitor, proposed to him to go and fight the Chimaera, which everybody else was afraid of, and which, unless it should be soon killed, was likely to convert Lycia into a desert. Bellerophon hesitated not a moment, but assured the king that he would either slay this dreaded Chimaera, or perish in the attempt.

But, in the first place, as the monster was so prodigiously swift, he bethought himself that he should never win the victory by fighting on foot. The wisest thing he could do, therefore, was to get the very best and fleetest horse that could anywhere be found. And what other horse, in all the world, was half so fleet as the marvellous horse Pegasus, who had wings as well as legs, and was even more active in the air than on the earth? To be sure, a great many people denied that there was any such horse with wings, and said that the stories about him were all poetry and nonsense. But, wonderful as it appeared, Bellerophon believed that Pegasus was a real steed, and hoped that he himself might be fortunate enough to find him; and, once fairly mounted on his back, he would be able to fight the Chimaera at better advantage.

And this was the purpose with which he had travelled from Lycia to Greece, and had brought the beautifully ornamented bridle in his hand. It was an enchanted bridle. If he could only succeed in putting the golden bit into the mouth of Pegasus, the winged horse would be submissive, and would own Bellerophon for his master, and fly whithersoever he might choose to turn the rein.

But, indeed, it was a weary and anxious time, while Bellerophon waited and waited for Pegasus, in hopes that he would come and drink at the Fountain of Pirene. He was afraid lest King Iobates should imagine that he had fled from the Chimaera. It pained him, too, to think how much mischief the monster was doing, while he himself, instead of fighting with it, was compelled to sit idly poring over the bright waters of Pirene, as they gushed out of the sparkling sand. And as Pegasus had come thither so seldom, in these latter days, and scarcely alighted there more than once in a lifetime, Bellerophon feared

that he might grow an old man, and have no strength left in his arms nor courage in his heart, before the winged horse would appear. Oh, how heavily passes the time while an adventurous youth is yearning to do his part in life, and to gather in the harvest of his renown! How hard a lesson it is to wait! Our life is brief, and how much of it is spent in teaching us only this!

Well was it for Bellerophon that the gentle child had grown so fond of him, and was never weary of keeping him company. Every morning the child gave him a new hope to put in his bosom, instead of yesterday's withered one.

"Dear Bellerophon," he would cry, looking up hopefully into his face, "I think we shall see Pegasus to-day!"

And, at length, if it had not been for the little boy's unwavering faith, Bellerophon would have given up all hope, and would have gone back to Lycia, and have done his best to slay the Chimaera without the help of his winged horse. And in that case poor Bellerophon would at least have been terribly scorched by the creature's breath, and would most probably have been killed and devoured. Nobody should ever try to fight an earth-born Chimaera, unless he can first get upon the back of an aerial steed.

One morning the child spoke to Bellerophon even more hopefully than usual.

"Dear, dear Bellerophon," cried he, "I know not why it is, but I feel as if we should certainly see Pegasus to-day!"

And all that day he would not stir a step from Bellerophon's side; so they ate a crust of bread together, and drank some of the water of the fountain. In the afternoon, there they sat, and Bellerophon had thrown his arm around the child, who likewise had put one of his little hands into Bellerophon's. The latter was lost in his own thoughts, and was fixing his eyes vacantly on the trunks of the trees that overshadowed the fountain, and on the grape vines that clambered up among their branches. But the gentle child was gazing down into the water. He was grieved, for Bellerophon's sake, that the hope of another day should be deceived like so many before it; and two or three quiet tear-drops fell from his eyes, and mingled with what were said to be the many tears of Pirene, when she wept for her slain children.

But, when he least thought of it, Bellerophon felt the pressure of the child's little hand, and heard a soft, almost breathless whisper.

"See there, dear Bellerophon! There is an image in the water!"

The young man looked down into the dimpling mirror of the fountain, and saw what he took to be the reflection of the bird, which seemed to be flying at a great height in the air, with a gleam of sunshine on its snowy or silvery wings.

"What a splendid bird it must be!" said he. "And how very large it looks, though it must really be flying higher than the clouds!"

"It makes me tremble!" whispered the child. "I am afraid to look up into the air! It is very beautiful, and yet I dare only look at its image in the water. Dear Bellerophon, do you not see that it is no bird? It is the winged horse Pegasus!"

Bellerophon's heart began to throb! He gazed keenly upward, but could not see the winged creature, whether bird or horse, because, just then, it had plunged into the fleecy depths of a summer cloud. It was but a moment, however, before the object re-appeared, sinking lightly down out of the cloud, although still at a vast distance from the earth. Bellerophon caught the child in his arms, and shrunk back with him, so that they were both hidden among the thick shrubbery which grew all around the fountain. Not that he was afraid of any harm, but he dreaded lest, if Pegasus caught a glimpse of them, he would fly far away, and alight in some inaccessible mountain-top. For it was really the winged horse. After they had expected him so long, he was coming to quench his thirst with the water of Pirene.

Nearer and nearer came the aerial wonder, flying in great circles, as you may have seen a dove when about to alight. Downward came Pegasus, in those wide, sweeping circles, which grew narrower and narrower still, as he gradually approached the earth.

At length—not that he was weary, but only idle and luxurious—Pegasus folded his wings, and lay down on the soft green turf. But, being too full of aerial life to remain quiet for many moments together, he soon rolled over on his back, with his four slender legs in the air. It was beautiful to see him, this one solitary creature, whose mate had never been created, but who needed no companion, and, living a great many hundred years, was as happy as the centuries were long. The more he did such things as mortal horses are accustomed to do, the less earthly and the more wonderful he seemed. Bellerophon and the child almost held their breath, partly from a delightful awe, but still more because they dreaded lest the slightest stir or murmur

should send him up, with the speed of an arrow-flight, into the furthest blue of the sky.

Finally, when he had had enough of rolling over and over, Pegasus turned himself about, and, indolently, like any other horse, put out his fore-legs, in order to rise from the ground; and Bellerophon, who had guessed that he would do so, darted suddenly from the thicket, and leaped astride on his back.

Yes, there he sat, on the back of the winged horse!

But what a bound did Pegasus make, when, for the first time, he felt the weight of a mortal man upon his loins! A bound, indeed! Before he had time to draw a breath, Bellerophon found himself five hundred feet aloft, and still shooting upward, while the winged horse snorted and trembled with terror and anger. Upward he went, up, up, up, until he plunged into the cold, misty bosom of a cloud, at which only a little while before Bellerophon had been gazing and fancying it a very pleasant spot. Then again, out of the heart of the cloud, Pegasus shot down like a thunder-bolt, as if he meant to dash both himself and his rider headlong against a rock. Then he went through about a thousand of the wildest caprioles that had ever been performed either by a bird or a horse.

I cannot tell you half that he did. He skimmed straightforward, and sideways, and backward. He reared himself erect, with his fore-legs on a wreath of mist, and his hind-legs on nothing at all. He flung out his heels behind, and put down his head between his legs, with his wings pointing right upward. At about two miles' height above the earth, he turned a somersault, so that Bellerophon's heels were where his head should have been, and he seemed to look down into the sky, instead of up. He twisted his head about, and, looking Bellerophon in the face, with fire flashing from his eyes, made a terrible attempt to bite him. He fluttered his pinions so wildly that one of the silver feathers was shaken out, and floating earthward, was picked up by the child, who kept it as long as he lived, in memory of Pegasus and Bellerophon.

But the latter (who, as you may judge, was as good a horseman as ever galloped) had been watching his opportunity, and at last clapped the golden bit of the enchanted bridle between the winged steed's jaws. No sooner was this done, than Pegasus became as manageable as if he had taken food, all his life, out of Bellerophon's hand. To speak what I really feel, it was almost a sadness to see so wild a creature grow suddenly so tame. And Pegasus seemed to feel it so likewise. He looked round to

Bellerophon, with the tears in his beautiful eyes, instead of the fire that so recently flashed from them. But when Bellerophon patted his head, and spoke a few authoritative, yet kind and soothing words, another look came into the eyes of Pegasus; for he was glad at heart, after so many lonely centuries, to have found a companion and a master.

Thus it always is with winged horses, and with all such wild and solitary creatures. If you can catch and overcome them, it is the surest way to win their love.

While Pegasus had been doing his utmost to shake Bellerophon off his back, he had flown a very long distance, and they had come within sight of a lofty mountain by the time the bit was in his mouth. Bellerophon had seen this mountain before, and knew it to be Helicon, on the summit of which was the winged horse's abode. Thither (after looking gently into his rider's face, as if to ask leave) Pegasus now flew, and, alighting, waited patiently until Bellerophon should please to dismount. The young man accordingly leaped from his steed's back, but still held him fast by the bridle. Meeting his eyes, however, he was so affected by the gentleness of his aspect, and by his beauty, and by the thought of the free life which Pegasus had heretofore lived, that he could not bear to keep him a prisoner, if he really desired his liberty.

Obeying this generous impulse, he slipped the enchanted bridle off the head of Pegasus, and took the bit from his mouth.

"Leave me, Pegasus!" said he. "Either leave me, or love me."

In an instant the winged horse shot almost out of sight, soaring straight upward from the summit of Mount Helicon. Being long after sunset, it was now twilight on the mountain-top, and dusky evening over all the country round about. But Pegasus flew so high that he overtook the departed day, and was bathed in the upper radiance of the sun. Ascending higher and higher, he looked like a bright speck, and at last could no longer be seen in the hollow waste of the sky. And Bellerophon was afraid that he should never behold him more; but, while he was lamenting his own folly, the bright speck re-appeared, and drew nearer and nearer, until it descended lower than the sunshine; and, behold, Pegasus had come back! After this trial, there was no more fear of the winged horse's making his escape. He and Bellerophon were friends, and put loving faith in one another.

That night they lay down and slept together, with Bellerophon's arm about the neck of Pegasus, not as a caution, but for

kindness; and they awoke at peep of day, and bade one another good-morning, each in his own language.

In this manner, Bellerophon and the wondrous steed spent several days, and grew better acquainted and fonder of each other all the time. They went on long aerial journeys, and sometimes ascended so high that the earth looked hardly bigger than—the moon. They visited distant countries and amazed the inhabitants, who thought that the beautiful young man, on the back of the winged horse, must have come down out of the sky. A thousand miles a day was no more than an easy space for the fleet Pegasus to pass over. Bellerophon was delighted with this kind of life, and would have liked nothing better than to live always in the same way, aloft in the clear atmosphere; for it was always sunny weather up there, however cheerless and rainy it might be in the lower region. But he could not forget the horrible Chimaera which he had promised King Iobates to slay. So at last, when he had become well accustomed to feats of horsemanship in the air, could manage Pegasus with the least motion of his hand, and had taught him to obey his voice, he determined to attempt the performance of this perilous adventure.

At daybreak, therefore, as soon as he unclosed his eyes, he gently pinched the winged horse's ear, in order to arouse him. Pegasus immediately started from the ground, and pranced about a quarter of a mile aloft, and made a grand sweep around the mountain-top, by way of showing that he was wide awake, and ready for any kind of an excursion. During the whole of this little flight he uttered a loud, brisk, and melodious neigh, and finally came down at Bellerophon's side as lightly as ever you saw a sparrow hop upon a twig.

"Well done, dear Pegasus; well done, my sky-skimmer," cried Bellerophon, fondly stroking the horse's neck. "And now, my fleet and beautiful friend, we must break our fast. To-day we are to fight the terrible Chimaera."

As soon as they had eaten their morning meal, and drank some sparkling water from a spring called Hippocrene, Pegasus held out his head, of his own accord, so that his master might put on the bridle. Then, with a great many playful leaps and airy caperings, he showed his impatience to be gone; while Bellerophon was girding on his sword, and hanging his shield about his neck, and preparing himself for battle. When everything was ready, the rider mounted, and (as was his custom when going a long distance) ascended five miles perpendicularly, so as the better to see whither he was directing

his course. He then turned the head of Pegasus towards the east, and set out for Lycia. In their flight they overtook an eagle, and came so nigh him, before he could get out of their way, that Bellerophon might easily have caught him by the leg. Hastening onward at this rate, it was still early in the forenoon when they beheld the lofty mountains of Lycia, with their deep and shaggy valleys. If Bellerophon had been told truly, it was in one of those dismal valleys that the hideous Chimaera had taken up its abode.

Being now so near their journey's end, the winged horse gradually descended with his rider; and they took advantage of some clouds that were floating over the mountain-tops, in order to conceal themselves. Hovering on the upper surface of a cloud, and peeping over its edge, Bellerophon had a pretty distinct view of the mountainous part of Lycia, and could look into all its shadowy vales at once. At first there appeared to be nothing remarkable. It was a wild, savage, and rocky tract of high and precipitous hills. In the more level part of the country, there were the ruins of houses that had been burnt, and, here and there, the carcasses of dead cattle strewn about the pastures where they had been feeding.

"The Chimaera must have done this mischief," thought Bellerophon. "But where can the monster be?"

As I have already said, there was nothing remarkable to be detected, at first sight, in any of the valleys and dells that lay among the precipitous heights of the mountains. Nothing at all; unless, indeed, it were three spires of black smoke, which issued from what seemed to be the mouth of a cavern, and clambered suddenly into the atmosphere. Before reaching the mountain-top, these three black smoke-wreaths mingled themselves into one. The cavern was almost directly beneath the winged horse and his rider, at the distance of about a thousand feet. The smoke, as it, crept heavily upward, had an ugly, sulphurous, stifling scent, which caused Pegasus to snort and Bellerophon to sneeze. So disagreeable was it to the marvellous steed (who was accustomed to breathe only the purest air), that he waved his wings, and shot half a mile out of the range of this offensive vapour.

But, on looking behind him, Bellerophon saw something that induced him first to draw the bridle, and then to turn Pegasus about. He made a sign which the winged horse understood, and sunk slowly through the air, until his hoofs were scarcely more than a man's height above the rocky bottom of the valley. In front, as far off as you could throw a stone, was the cavern's

mouth, with the three smoke-wreaths oozing out of it. And what else did Bellerophon behold there?

There seemed to be a heap of strange and terrible creatures curled up within the cavern. Their bodies lay so close together, that Bellerophon could not distinguish them apart: but judging by their heads, one of these creatures was a huge snake, the second a fierce lion, and the third an ugly goat. The lion and the goat were asleep; the snake was broad awake, and kept staring around him with a great pair of fiery eyes. But—and this was the most wonderful part of the matter, the three spires of smoke evidently issued from the nostrils of these three heads! So strange was the spectacle, that, though Bellerophon had been all along expecting it, the truth did not immediately occur to him, that here was the terrible three-headed Chimaera. He had found out the Chimaera's cavern. The snake, the lion, and the goat, as he supposed them to be, were not three separate creatures, but one monster!

The wicked, hateful thing! Slumbering as two-thirds of it were, it still held, in its abominable claws, the remnant of an unfortunate lamb—or possibly (but I hate to think so) it was a dear little boy—which its three mouths had been gnawing before two of them fell asleep!

All at once, Bellerophon started as from a dream, and knew it to be the Chimaera. Pegasus seemed to know it at the same instant, and sent forth a neigh, that sounded like the call of a trumpet to battle. At this sound the three heads reared themselves erect, and belched out great flashes of flame. Before Bellerophon had time to consider what to do next, the monster flung itself out of the cavern and sprung straight towards him, with its immense claws extended and its snaky tail twisting itself venomously behind. If Pegasus had not been as nimble as a bird, both he and his rider would have been overthrown by the Chimaera's headlong rush, and thus the battle have been ended before it was well begun. But the winged horse was not to be caught so. In the twinkling of an eye he was up aloft, half-way to the clouds, snorting with anger. He shuddered, too, not with affright, but with utter disgust at the loathsomeness of this poisonous thing with three heads.

The Chimaera, on the other hand, raised itself up so as to stand absolutely on the tip-end of its tail, with its talons pawing fiercely in the air, and its three heads spluttering fire at Pegasus and his rider. My stars, how it roared, and hissed, and bellowed!

Bellerophon, meanwhile, was fitting his shield on his arm, and drawing his sword.

"Now, my beloved Pegasus," he whispered in the winged horse's ear, "thou must help me to slay this insufferable monster; or else thou shalt fly back to thy solitary mountain peak without thy friend Bellerophon. For either the Chimaera dies, or its three mouths shall gnaw this head of mine, which has slumbered upon thy neck!"

Pegasus whinnied, and, turning back his head, rubbed his nose tenderly against his rider's cheek. It was his way of telling him that, though he had wings and was an immortal horse, yet he would perish, if it were possible for immortality to perish, rather than leave Bellerophon behind.

"I thank you, Pegasus," answered Bellerophon. "Now, then, let us make a dash at the monster!"

Uttering these words, he shook the bridle; and Pegasus darted down aslant, as swift as the flight of an arrow, right towards the Chimaera's threefold head, which, all this time, was poking itself as high as it could into the air. As he came within arm's length, Bellerophon made a cut at the monster, but was carried onward by his steed, before he could see whether the blow had been successful. Pegasus continued his course, but soon wheeled round, at about the same distance from the Chimaera as before. Bellerophon then perceived that he had cut the goat's head of the monster almost off, so that it dangled downward by the skin, and seemed quite dead.

But to make amends, the snake's head and the lion's head had taken all the fierceness of the dead one into themselves, and spit flame, and hissed, and roared, with a vast deal more fury than before.

"Never mind, my brave Pegasus!" cried Bellerophon. "With another stroke like that we will stop either its hissing or its roaring."

And again he shook the bridle. Dashing aslant-wise, as before, the winged horse made another arrow-flight towards the Chimaera, and Bellerophon aimed another downright stroke at one of the two remaining heads, as he shot by. But, this time, neither he nor Pegasus escaped so well as at first. With one of its claws, the Chimaera had given the young man a deep scratch in his shoulder, and had slightly damaged the left wing of the flying steed with the other. On his part, Bellerophon had

mortally wounded the lion's head of the monster, insomuch that it now hung downward, with its fire almost extinguished, and sending out gasps of thick black smoke. The snake's head, however (which was the only one now left), was twice as fierce and venomous as ever before. It belched forth shoots of fire five hundred yards long, and emitted hisses so loud, so harsh, and so ear-piercing, that King Iobates heard them, fifty miles off, and trembled till the throne shook under him.

"Well-a-day!" thought the poor king; "the Chimaera is certainly coming to devour me!"

Meanwhile, Pegasus had again paused in the air, and neighed angrily, while sparkles of a pure crystal flame darted out of his eyes. How unlike the lurid fire of the Chimaera! The aerial steed's spirit was all aroused, and so was that of Bellerophon.

"Dost thou bleed, my immortal horse?" cried the young man, caring less for his own hurt than for the anguish of this glorious creature, that ought never to have tasted pain. "The execrable Chimaera shall pay for this mischief, with his last head!"

Then he shook the bridle, shouted loudly, and guided Pegasus, not aslant-wise as before, but straight at the monster's hideous front. So rapid was the onset, that it seemed but a dazzle and a flash, before Bellerophon was at close grips with the enemy.

The Chimaera, by this time, after losing its second head, had got into a red-hot passion of pain and rampant rage. It so flounced about, half on earth and partly in the air, that it was impossible to say which element it rested upon. It opened its snake-jaws to such an abominable width, that Pegasus might almost, I was going to say, have flown right down its throat, wings outspread, rider and all? At their approach it shot out a tremendous blast of its fiery breath, and enveloped Bellerophon and his steed in a perfect atmosphere of flame, singeing the wings of Pegasus, scorching off one whole side of the young man's golden ringlets, and making them both far hotter than was comfortable, from head to foot.

But this was nothing to what followed.

When the airy rush of the winged horse had brought him within the distance of a hundred yards, the Chimaera gave a spring, and flung its huge, awkward, venomous, and utterly detestable carcase a right upon poor Pegasus, clung round him with might and main, and tied up its snaky tail into a knot! Up flew the aerial steed, higher, higher, higher, above the mountain peaks,

above the clouds, and almost out of sight of the solid earth. But still the earth-born monster kept its hold, and was borne upward, along with the creature of light and air. Bellerophon, meanwhile turning about, found himself face to face with the ugly grimness of the Chimaera's visage, and could only avoid being scorched to death, or bitten right in twain, by holding up his shield. Over the upper edge of the shield, he looked sternly into the savage eyes of the monster.

But the Chimaera was so mad and wild with pain, that it did not guard itself so well as might else have been the case. Perhaps, after all, the best way to fight a Chimaera is by getting as close to it as you can. In its efforts to stick its horrible iron claws into its enemy, the creature left its own breast quite exposed; and perceiving this, Bellerophon thrust his sword up to the hilt into its cruel heart. Immediately the snaky tail untied its knot. The monster let go its hold of Pegasus, and fell from that vast height downward; while the fire within its bosom, instead of being put out, burned fiercer than ever, and quickly began to consume the dead carcase. Thus it fell out of the sky, all a-flame, and (it being nightfall before it reached the earth) was mistaken for a shooting star or a comet. But at early sunrise, some cottager's were going to their day's labour, and saw, to their astonishment, that several acres of ground were strewn with black ashes. In the middle of a field there was a heap of whitened bones, a great deal higher than a haystack. Nothing else was ever seen of the dreadful Chimaera!

And when Bellerophon had won the victory, he bent forward and kissed Pegasus, while the tears stood in his eyes.

"Back now, my beloved steed!" said he. "Back to the Fountain of Pirene!"

Pegasus skimmed through the air, quicker than ever he did before, and reached the fountain in a very short time. And there he found the old man leaning on his staff, and the country fellow watering his cow, and the pretty maiden filling her pitcher.

"I remember now," quoth the old man, "I saw this winged horse once before, when I was quite a lad. But he was ten times handsomer in those days."

"I own a cart-horse worth three of him!" said the country fellow. "If this pony were mine, the first thing I should do would be to clip his wings!"

But the poor maiden said nothing, for she had always the luck to be afraid at the wrong time. So she ran away, and let her pitcher tumble down, and broke it.

"Where is the gentle child," asked Bellerophon, "who used to keep me company, and never lost his faith, and never was weary of gazing into the fountain?"

"Here am I, dear Bellerophon!" said the child, softly.

For the little boy had spent day after day, on the margin of Pirene, waiting for his friend to come back; but when he perceived Bellerophon descending through the clouds, mounted on the winged horse, he had shrunk back into the shrubbery. He was a delicate and tender child, and dreaded lest the old man and the country fellow should see the tears gushing from his eyes.

"Thou hast won the victory," said he, joyfully, running to the knee of Bellerophon, who still sat on the back of Pegasus. "I knew thou wouldst."

"Yes, dear child!" replied Bellerophon, alighting from the winged horse. "But if thy faith had not helped me, I should never have waited for Pegasus, and never have gone up above the clouds, and never have conquered the terrible Chimaera. Thou, my beloved little friend, hast done it all. And now let us give Pegasus his liberty."

So he slipped off the enchanted bridle from the head of the marvellous steed.

"Be free, for evermore, my Pegasus!" cried he with a shade of sadness in his tone. "Be as free as thou art fleet!"

But Pegasus rested his head on Bellerophon's shoulder, and would not be persuaded to take flight.

"Well, then," said Bellerophon, caressing the airy horse, "thou shalt be with me as long as thou wilt; and we will go together forthwith, and tell King Iobates that the Chimaera is destroyed."

Then Bellerophon embraced the gentle child, and promised to come to him again, and departed. But, in after years, that child took higher flights upon the aerial steed than ever did Bellerophon, and achieved more honourable deeds than his friend's victory over the Chimaera. For, gentle and tender as he was, he grew to be a mighty poet!
